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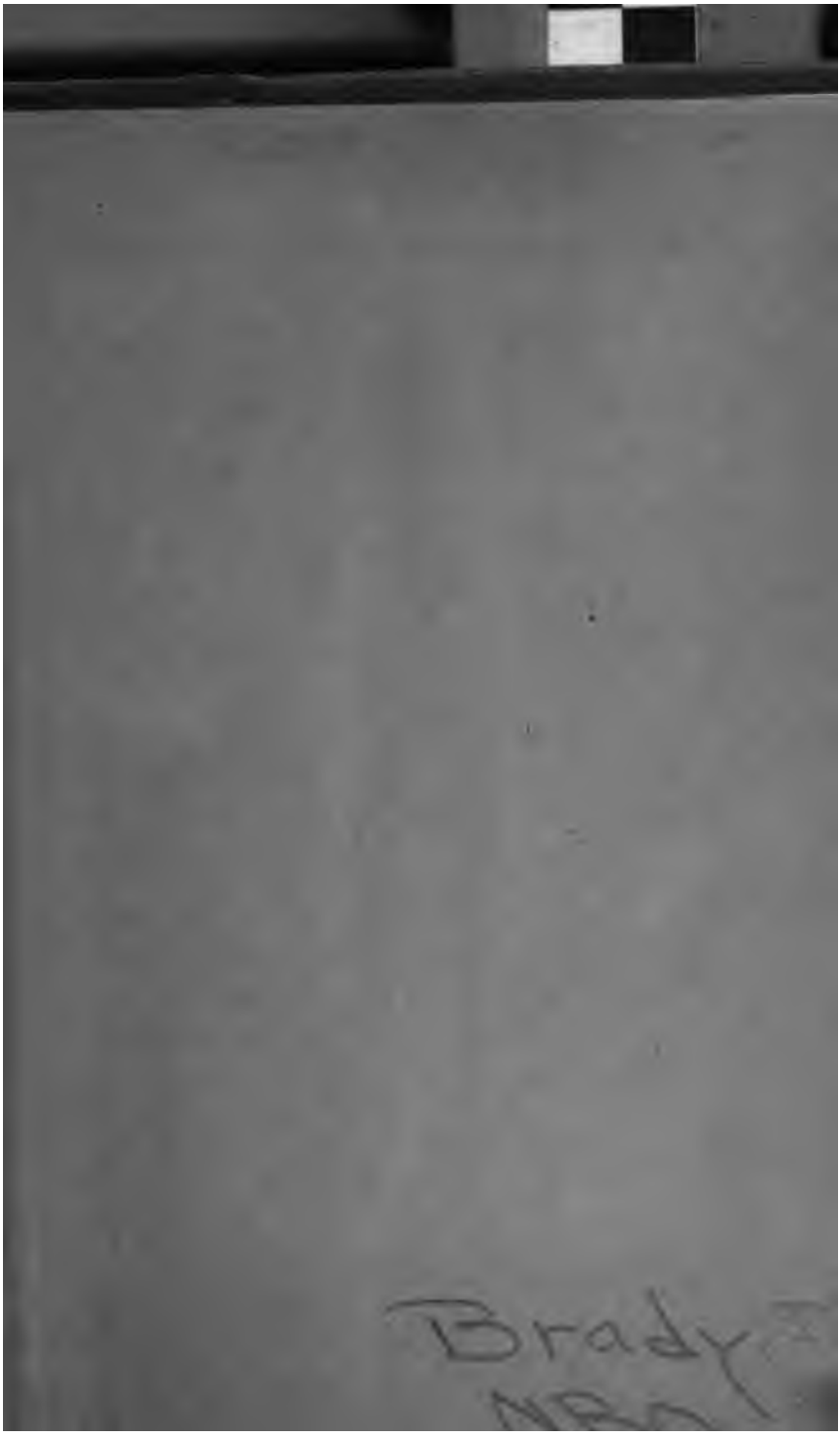
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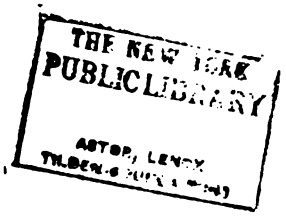

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THE CASE OF MARY SHERMAN


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"So long as you stay within the law it makes no difference how many hearts you break!" MARY SHERMAN

[redacted]

The Case of Mary Sherman

A NOVEL

By

JASPER EWING BRADY

Illustrated by

CHARLES F. LESTER



New York
Britton Publishing Company

SIS42A

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To My Wife

MARJORIE SHOALS BRADY

I Affectionately Dedicate This Book

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"Very well, gentlemen, I'll consent, but I want it distinctly understood that everything we do must be open and above board." 72

"Stop it, right now, Hank!—or I'll——" Right here a slight, blue-robed and lace-capped little white-haired woman came between the two strong men 192

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THE CASE OF MARY SHERMAN

CHAPTER I

THE ELECTION OF DR. ANDERSON

"I NOMINATE the Reverend Henry Trumbull Anderson, Doctor of Divinity, and Rector of St. George's Parish, Hillsburg, for Bishop of the Diocese of Presidio."

The speaker of these words had made a shrewd calculation. He looked around him with utter coolness, smiling, as he witnessed the growing excitement. The long session was about to end.

"Who is this Dr. Anderson?"

The question was practically universal, for Presidio was all of two thousand miles from the Pennsylvania city. The doubt was quickly settled by the Rev. Julius Schott, rector of St. James' Parish, who knew him well. In a jiffy he was on his feet to second the nomination.

"I know Dr. Anderson personally," said

he, "and what my good brother, Mr. Spencer, has said of him, is true. There is no need down East to ask the question—'who is Dr. Anderson?' His magnetic eloquence, his untiring zeal, his broad-mindedness . . . these have made him a great leader of men. He was reared in the boundless West, but was called East a few years ago. He knows our people and their ways. We need him. Let us call him back home, where, under the divine guidance of an Almighty God, he will make the diocese of Presidio one of the foremost in the church."

When the Rev. Schott took his seat there was a moment's silence—then the great room burst into an uproar. The friends of the rival candidate, Dr. Lamb, sprang up, demanding that the convention delay over night in making so momentous a decision. Lowe, the floor leader, glanced around for a certain Mr. Kearney, but that astute gentleman was not present at the moment, whereupon he made another motion to adjourn. This also was voted down.

Mr. Spencer had solved the real problem by bringing forth a dark horse, thus easing the tender feelings of the other candidates. The presiding officer, the venerable and white-haired Bishop Turner, had felt a thrill of joy in his heart

during the whole of Spencer's speech. He had nodded his head approvingly when Dr. Anderson's name was placed in nomination, watched eagerly for the "second," and, before the balloting began, faced the altar and raised his hands in prayer. He fervently implored the Almighty to guide the hearts and minds of the delegates in the way that was right.

The scene was an impressive one. It created an atmosphere of old-time sincerity long since lacking in the affairs of the good old church. The sun was setting in the stillness of the early spring evening. Through a stained glass window came a brilliant ray, which cast a halo of glory over the patriarchal bishop, as he stood there waiting. One by one the delegates came forward to the chancel rail and cast their ballots. Then came the stirring event—the counting of the votes. Even Bishop Turner's voice was surcharged with emotion, as he stepped to the rail and announced the result.

"Dr. Anderson—lay votes, fifty-seven—clerical, twenty—total, seventy-seven," he said impressively; and, in a lower tone, "Dr. Lamb—lay votes, three—clerical, three—total, six."

The sigh of relief which followed was most expressive of the strain under which the entire

convention had worked. Only the upraised hand of the speaker restrained the cheer that was about to burst forth in the church.

"Gentlemen," he continued, "you have elected Dr. Anderson your bishop, and you have done wisely. Presidio, with its commanding geographical position, needs such a man. A woeful lack of interest has been shown for the past few years in the church. Even the ladies have lost heart in the conduct of their auxiliaries and guilds. St. Clement's Cathedral—the very building we are meeting in—is in a deplorable condition. The pipe organ needs repairs, and the church fittings are sadly in need of attention. The only redeeming feature is the bishop's residence. That building, as you know, is a large, roomy, comfortable place, but do you know that it is mortgaged to the last dollar? The entire diocese is burdened with a debt that should be lifted immediately, and if there is one man in this country capable of doing the work needed here it is Dr. Anderson."

Again he lifted a restraining hand.

"Why, gentlemen," he continued, rising to his full height and looking toward the door, which had just opened to admit the Mr. Kearney whom the supporters of Dr. Lamb had looked for—"the

only time this cathedral has housed a congregation of respectable size during recent years, was at the funeral of the late bishop. To-day a lady remarked to me, 'The only way Dr. Axtell could get a crowd in his cathedral was to die!' "

The bishop paused a moment so that his auditors could catch their breath, and then proceeded:

"Now, gentlemen of the convention, you have elected a man who will not suffer such a condition of affairs to continue for long. The new bishop of Presidio is a man of blood and iron, a man of fire—totally unafraid. He will mould this diocese with its conflicting elements, its warring interests, into a harmonious whole. He will work on Highdays, Weekdays, Holidays, Sundays—for the benefit of all. You are, indeed, fortunate, and I congratulate you. There being no further business in order, I declare this convention adjourned without date, but before I pronounce the benediction, I ask you *all* to join in singing the Doxology."

Never before in the history of St. Clement's had this old song of praise been sung with such fervor. It sounded more like a long cheer, and, as the church rang with the echoes, Kearney threw his cigar behind him, and rushed over to where Lowe was standing.

"What does this mean?" he asked in an excited whisper, not waiting for the benediction to close.

"Nothing much," replied Lowe. "They've just elected a new bishop—that is all."

"Elected a new bishop!"

Kearney gasped in astonishment.

"Who? Lamb?"

"No—a chap from Pennsylvania—I looked for you a moment ago to tell you that things were going against us, but you were out and I had to let them win the battle."

"I was talking to Dudley. What is the new bishop's name?"

"Anderson. They say he's a fighter, too."

Lowe outlined all that happened when they reached the open air. Kearney was completely taken by surprise.

"Well, I'll be——" he stopped short. "The chief will go crazy. He's set his heart on putting Lamb in, and he isn't used to defeat."

Shaking his head skeptically, he went to the telephone.

"Hello—is that you, Jim?—the convention has just adjourned."

"Good!" was the answer. "We'll get them to-morrow. I've just wired Lamb to come on."

"Better send him another to stay where he is."

"What do you mean? Why, you said a half-hour ago that you were sure Lowe would secure a delay until to-morrow. I'm going to bring more pressure to bear. I'm——"

Kearney smiled in spite of himself.

"But the convention will not meet to-morrow. It's finished. They've elected their bishop—locked up the place and skedaddled. Schott and St. Clair both bolted for this new man."

"Schott and St. Clair. No! But who in blazes is the man they elected?"

"A Dr. Anderson, of Hillsburg, Pennsylvania."

"Who the deuce is Anderson?"

"Dunno much. Tell you more about him when I get down to the office."

For a moment there was silence. And then the wires rang with anathemas from the chief.

"Oh, they have elected their bishop, have they? Well, the fight hasn't begun yet. They may think so, but I'm not accustomed to being dictated to. I'll put Lamb in there or know the reason why."

Kearney was used to these outbursts; he waited patiently.

"Come down to the office immediately," was the command. The sudden clicking of the re-

ceiver gave a sort of snap to the order, and Kearney strolled away knowing full well what kind of an interview awaited him.

CHAPTER II

"BIG CHIEF" DUDLEY

JAMES BURCHARD DUDLEY, commonly known as "Big Chief," editor and proprietor of Presidio's most powerful newspaper, *The Morning Banner,* was a man who had risen from the very bottom of the ladder to the top. Twenty-five years before when Presidio was only a small Western town, he had come there to live. He was then about thirty years old, had a few thousands in cash and absolute belief in the future of the great West; likewise, an unbounded confidence in himself. Reared on a West Virginia farm, he tired of the country and started out to conquer the world through the cities. His first qualification was aggressiveness, next to that a peculiar ability to write.

His first stop—Cincinnati—gave him his chance, for there he secured a position on a large paper. His progress was rapid. His money was

as safe as if sewed in his inside pocket. He spent nothing, and foraged upon the community in which he found himself. When other men with more natural ability would have failed, Dudley succeeded. He used the pronoun "I" frequently; was something of an egotist, but the main thing was that he succeeded. In two years' time he had not only made a decent living for himself, but he had added another thousand or two to his savings.

But the West called him, and the boom in Presidio settled the matter of location. He looked it up and found that its geographical position was ideal. It was near the western edge of the country. The lands about were rich in soil and minerals. Railroads must necessarily come there. The A. N. & W. was already there with all four of its feet in the trough—and others would follow. With the railroads must come people—then civilization—then wealth.

The Banner, a paper with no politics and less principles, afforded him his first job, but in two years Dudley was its editor, and soon thereafter, its owner. *The Banner* was the only paper in Presidio having an Associated Press franchise, and Dudley well knew its increasing value. While he did not have all the money necessary to pay for the paper, he was shrewd in placating the

banking interests of the city, and they helped him to acquire the plant from cellar to garret. Every dollar of this loan he repaid. He vitalized the paper with his virile personality and fought on all public issues, sometimes right, sometimes wrong, but the main idea is that he fought, and the fighter always gets *somewhere*. A temporary defeat merely meant further effort to succeed, and thus *The Banner* grew until, when this story opens, it boasted a circulation equal to one paper for every house in Presidio.

In addition to developing his paper, Dudley invested in other lines. He knew that real estate as a foundation of a fortune is impregnable, and he also knew that Presidio would grow towards the hills. This was a foregone conclusion, for the flat districts were logically the part to be turned over to business. But at the time he thought of this, very few others had done the same, and he was able to buy three hundred acres of land on the crags and peaks for almost a song. When he purchased the rocky tract it was considered unfit for anything and people called it "Dudley's Folly." Dudley, however, bided his time, built himself a stately home away up on the highest rugged hill top and named it "Rocky Crest." It was a sort of emblem of the man's eternal grit.

Then the town grew, people did begin to climb, as Dudley had predicted. He improved and restricted the neighborhood, and fixed a considerable sum as a standard building price for the homes in the Rocky Crest section. He was bound to win. In twenty years he had made as many thousands as he had invested hundreds.

Presidio was at the time the story opens a city of more than a quarter of a million souls and rapidly growing. "Big Chief" Dudley—now a multi-millionaire—was absolutely in control of its political destiny. His newspaper was his most direct means of power, but his personality exerted a dreaded influence through a hundred other channels. He was the "Boss." Political elections were decided in his office. Valuable franchises were his for the asking. Everyone was afraid of him. Through use of money and bulldog tenacity he had become the dictator of Presidio, brooking no interference and ruling with a rod of iron.

There were two other papers in Presidio, *The Tribune,* and *The Scimitar,* but they were negligible quantities because of Dudley's control of the Associated Press franchise.

Dudley, now a man of between fifty-five and sixty years, was very short and stout, with a fat,

round face, iron-gray hair, and a bristling, stubby mustache. His chin had tripled itself and his hands were flabby. To see him sitting in the rear seat of his high-powered automobile, as he came dashing downtown, one could not help but remark the opulence reflected from the rear cushions. The scene represented the very obesity of power. Dudley had few personal friends—many sycophantic followers—numberless enemies—men, who, while hating him, also feared him. Being a widower, he lived in solitary state in his mansion on the hill.

His enemies he divided into three classes—men who opposed him in business ventures—politicians arrayed against him in campaigns—lastly, personal enemies. The first two he could fight, whip, and then let alone. But his personal enemies he never forgot nor forgave. He kept a list of these; people called it his "Index Expurgatorius."

It was a wonder that the citizens of Presidio had not risen in their wrath and destroyed the tyrant. The truth of the matter was that the people were afraid of his power. There had never been a man in Presidio who had either the courage or the desire to head a healthy opposition to Dudley. Besides, *The Banner* was a most ex-

cellent paper—barring the personality of its proprietor. As a disseminator of news it was metropolitan in character, and as an advertising medium it could not be excelled. Another thing, Presidio's citizens were busy making money and developing their city. It was growing by leaps and bounds and already was one of the most aggressive communities in the country.

Dudley, in spite of his defects, possessed qualities that were not to be ignored. For one thing, he loved his city and worked early and late for its betterment. It was due to him that Presidio had great, wide avenues, fine public buildings and many parks. Dudley's dream was a marvelous city of the future, and, although he went about it in a way that was not generally regarded as an ethical one, yet he was convinced he was right, and merely laughed at the men who opposed him.

His position in Presidio was certain, and reformer after reformer "bit the dust," as he phrased it. Under his skin the American citizen is peace-loving, and Dudley appealed to this sense. Though his iron-bound rule brought many hardships it was good for business, and it steadied the life of the city as nothing else could have done. A leader of this sort may not be all that could be desired, but there is no denying that he *is*

a leader and a powerful one. His fingers are stuck in every pie. His hands reach forth into the outermost edges of political life. He dictates elections. He controls parties. In the case of Dudley his great wealth and his powerful paper were his principal tools, but it is doubtful whether he depended more upon them than on his own strong character.

One of the things which had interested him from the start was the office of the bishop of Presidio. This diocese had been under a certain Dr. Axtell, a fine old man of the old school who lacked initiative and spirit. As the convention had not provided him with assistants, he had allowed matters to drift until the diocese became weighted with useless debts and its people lost interest. The bishop had been unable to rectify matters and had been forced to see his beloved charge slip into the terrible condition in which it was found after his death. Because of this there had been a universal demand for a bishop who could do things . . . a man of vision and power. Several names had been presented to the convention, but it had not become interested until the name of Anderson had been announced.

Dudley had watched events with close interest. He had selected a certain Dr. Lamb, at this time

serving as the Missionary Bishop of a far Western state. Dr. Lamb had once been the rector of St. James' parish, Presidio, and was well liked by the social element. But he was not a man of force. Far too convivial for the higher efficiency, he loved society with all its frills, seemingly much better than he loved the work of the church. Dudley knew all this, but had planned to control him, and thus obtain a new means of power over a long-suffering community. But he had reckoned without his host.

He wanted him for several reasons; in fact, had promised the position to him, and Jim Dudley always redeemed his promises . . . that is, almost always. But this time the field of operations was more difficult. Religion was not the same as politics and it proved a greater problem than he imagined. Of course, the "Big Chief" did not attend the convention; he was far too wise for that. He thought he could handle matters the same as he did in city councils and other bodies . . . just issue orders and let his henchmen do the work, himself to be content with the power behind the throne. His chief henchman, Patrick J. Kearney, a thoroughly competent and dependable man, and his confidential agent, had been selected to do the work on the floor.

About half way through the day's session, which had resulted in Anderson's election, Kearney had called his chief to the wire.

"Things dead-locked out here, Jim. Doesn't seem to be any chance of doing anything. Everyone tired out."

"Never mind, Kearney," came back Dudley's voice in gruff tones. "Tell Lowe to hold fast. If the delegates are tired, now is the chance to stampede them to Lamb. Have some one get up and make a rip-snorting speech. It's the psychological moment. We'll win, I tell you."

"All right, Jim. I'll see what I can do. Goodbye."

Dudley had truly spoken—it was the *psychological* instant. Five minutes later Anderson was elected. And when Dudley received this news he flew into one of those ungovernable rages for which he was distinguished.

"True," he said to himself, "I don't give a hang about Lamb or the church, but it is just this idea of being licked. A prairie fire starts from a small blaze. So might Presidio become imbued with the idea they can beat me. And that would *never, never do.*"

Jim Dudley sat in his richly furnished office—always fastidious in his tastes—and waited im-

patiently for Kearney. That worthy took his time returning to the chief. He knew what awaited him, and he decided to let Dudley cool off a bit before he appeared. For years he had been associated with him, and he was the one man who did not fear him. He disliked quarreling, and had bitterly objected to the chief's mixing in religious politics. When he entered the office, Dudley leaped to his feet.

"Well! you got your licking, eh?"

"Who, me?" grinned Kearney. "Oh, I don't know. Maybe it was somebody else who got licked—huh?"

Kearney was Irish with a saving sense of humor. Although he was Dudley's right-hand man and in his pay, he preserved that independence of thought so typical of his race. He was the one man Dudley could not bluff.

"No, not you," growled the chief, whose voice, always sharp, was now rasping. "What about this convention? Tell me all you know."

"Nothing about it," tersely answered Kearney, biting off the end of a cigar and lighting it. "I told you over the 'phone they had elected a bishop and—it—wasn't—Lamb. That's all."

Dudley, by this time, had flown into a second rage.

"No, it's not all," he thundered. "Who did it —and how? You 'phoned that the delegates were tired out and ready to quit. A short while later you 'phoned again saying they elected this . . . this . . . what the deuce is his name?"

"Anderson."

"Yes, Anderson."

"Well, Jim, that's just what they did. After I first 'phoned you I was having a quiet smoke outside and ruminating on the blamed foolishness of your mixing up in a fight that did not concern you, and from which you could derive no possible benefit, when all at once I heard a big racket inside. It sounded queer, and I went in to see what was going on. It was queer, all right, for they had finished their work and were listening to a talk by the presiding officer. Lowe gave me the details afterwards."

Kearney then related all he knew, adding: "I'm glad it is all over. I don't fancy church work, it's not our game. I'm not sorry you're licked."

"Licked! Who says I'm licked?" shouted Dudley. "This Anderson is *elected*, but he isn't *consecrated* yet, and he shall not be if I can help it."

"Cut it out, Jim. We've got all we can handle

in this franchise fight. Besides, Anderson may be just the man you want. You don't know him and one can never tell."

"No . . . and I don't want to know him. He may be a saint, but *I said Lamb, and I want Lamb!*" Always the eternal "I" with Dudley.

"All right," answered Kearney. "It's your funeral and not mine. So, go to it."

"You bet I will," snapped Dudley.

He knew that before Dr. Anderson could be consecrated in his new position as bishop of Presidio, his election must be confirmed by the House of Bishops, and there was a great number in this house, representing, as they did, the general church of America. Dudley would attack him there. He realized that big and powerful as he was, he could not afford to attack Dr. Anderson through *The Banner*. He was entirely too wise to become embroiled in a church controversy, but he could, and did, use certain methods at which he was the master hand.

His first procedure was to dictate a letter to every bishop voting in the house, in each of which was stated that Dr. Anderson's election was a mistake; that it was rushed through by highhanded methods; that the real sentiment of the diocese, lay and clerical, was

against the bishop-elect; also that the new bishop would never be able to mould the widely separated units of the torn diocese into a good working organization, a matter of supreme necessity for the good of the church. On the other hand, Dr. Lamb was well known, had once been a member of the Clericus of Presidio . . . and, besides, he enjoyed great social prestige which would help him in the work.

Dudley made one tremendous mistake, a not unusual circumstance for men of his calibre. He sent a letter containing his views to Bishop Turner, who had presided over the Presidio convention, and who, by virtue of his rank, would also preside over the House of Bishops. It so happened that Bishop Turner's diocese adjoined Presidio on the south, and the good bishop knew conditions better than most men. Also he knew Dudley, and, likewise, Dr. Anderson. It was under Bishop Turner's tutelage that Dr. Anderson had taken his holy orders, first of the diaconate, and then the priesthood. As a matter of fact, Bishop Turner had suggested to the Reverend Spencer the idea of presenting Dr. Anderson's name.

Even churchmen must play at politics once in a while, so Bishop Turner, after receiving Dud-

ley's letter, immediately became a very busy man, and wrote a personal communication to every bishop, setting forth the real facts of the case, and urging confirmation of Dr. Anderson's election. In point of service Bishop Turner was the ablest in the country. His diocese was as good as Presidio's was bad, and he knew that Dr. Anderson was the man for Presidio. He could and would redeem the lost prestige—something that Dr. Lamb never could have done. The fight waxed to a bitter finish, resulting finally in the complete defeat of the "Big Chief." The House of Bishops met, and the election of the new bishop was confirmed by unanimous consent.

CHAPTER III

A MOMENTOUS DECISION

ALL during the fight waged against him in Presidio, Dr. Anderson, the innocent cause of Dudley's wrath, pursued the even tenor of his every day life in the rectory at Hillsburg, in far away Pennsylvania. In stature he presented an unusually fine type of physical manhood. Six feet two in his stockings, weight well above two hundred, muscular, athletic, iron-gray hair, sparkling, bluish eyes, a large mouth, well filled with strong teeth—he looked aggressive, and he was. He carried his fifty-two years most gracefully, and was at peace with all the world.

His church was a magnificent structure, absolutely free from debt, and his salary was more than satisfactory, considering the comfortable rectory, which he occupied with his wife, and a son aged ten. There were other children, five of them, making six in all; one a civil engineer in

South America, another an officer of the United States Army, two daughters in a fashionable school in Philadelphia, and one married daughter living in the central West. And, besides, the good doctor was a grandfather, although he didn't look it. All things considered, Dr. Anderson had every reason to be satisfied, since, in addition to all of the blessings referred to, he had become a celebrated author, and his novels, stirring tales of the army, navy and western life, were widely read, and brought in a handsome income on the side. In every sense of the word his life was a happy one.

But life cannot be "all beer and skittles," and one night as the good doctor sat smoking, his mind ruminated over the things with which he came in daily contact, that very day for instance, he had baptized an infant at ten o'clock, married a couple at two, and buried an old parishioner at four.

"The entire gamut of life in one day," thought he, "birth, marriage, and death." Here his thoughts were interrupted by the knock of a neatly dressed maid.

"A telegram for you, sir."

"Thank you," said he, breaking the seal and hurriedly glancing over its contents. Then he sat

bolt upright and read it over and over again. It was dated at Presidio on the day previous and marked "delayed in transmission." It read as follows:

"The convention of the diocese of Presidio today elected you its bishop. I regard it as a divine call and urge you take no action until you receive my letter, which will go forward tonight."

"(Signed) TURNER, Presiding Bishop."

Dr. Anderson was astounded. The idea of a bishopric had never entered his mind. Several times he had been approached on the subject by small dioceses, but had always declined. He was a godly man and a thorough churchman, but, somehow, the idea of being a bishop never had appealed to him. He loved the good things of life, and his living as rector of St. George's was better than that of many bishops—most of them, in fact. Not that Dr. Anderson was a slacker; far from it! His work in the West during the days of his dioconate and early priesthood had proved his fighting qualities, and now he felt that he had earned the sinecure he held at present, and he was loath to give it up. But here was a condition, not

a theory confronting him. Bishop Turner's request that he should not take action until his letter was received caused the doctor quite a little uneasiness, because he had more respect and veneration for Bishop Turner than any other man in the church. He looked up to him as a son would look up to a father. At this juncture his very charming wife returned from a shopping tour and found him so absorbed in his thoughts that he was unaware of her approach.

"Tired, dear?" she asked sweetly, as she kissed him.

"No, not tired, Helen, just thinking. This message came a few minutes ago."

Unused to such worldly matters, Mrs. Anderson took up the telegram wonderingly, and read it through more than once. Amazed at its contents she finally laid it on his desk. Husband and wife gazed at each other for many long moments before either spoke.

"But you won't accept it, will you, dear?" Mrs. Anderson's question contained a more than slight tone of protest.

"I don't know, Helen. If I consulted my own personal feelings and our comfort, I would decline it instantly, but there's Bishop Turner's request to await his letter. Bishop Turner, as you

know, dear, is a leader in the church, and I'm a follower. I won't make a snap decision, of that you may be sure."

"Oh, but I don't want to leave here," she expostulated. "Everything is so pleasant and comfortable, and the girls are only a short ride from us. And Presidio," Mrs. Anderson shuddered; "ugh! Presidio is away out West—the jumping-off place!"

Dr. Anderson smiled; his gentle wife was Eastern born, and had never been in the glorious West, save on flying trips with him. She could not realize that people were people wherever they were, nor did she know all her good husband knew about the condition of the diocese of Presidio. Dr. Anderson was well informed from church reports, and from correspondence with brother clergymen. Had she known what he knew, her opposition would have been still stronger.

"Nonsense, Helen," laughed the doctor; "you're prejudiced against the West. Presidio is a splendid city, and we could be just as happy there as any place. Happiness is not a question of locality, rather of personality—of ourselves."

"Yes, I know, Henry, I could be happy with you any place on earth, but——"

"There, there, dearest, let's not discuss it any

more. We'll wait until we hear from Bishop Turner."

"All right, we will;" picking up her gloves, she went downstairs, leaving the doctor alone with his thoughts. That night as Helen Anderson slept she had a dream—a bad one—and that dream spelled "P—R—E—S—I—D—I—O."

The very next day Bishop Turner's letter came by special delivery. It reviewed the work of the Presidio convention, giving all details leading up to Dr. Anderson's election, and wound up by adjuring him to accept. "The church needs you," was the substance of his powerful appeal. Dr. Anderson, being a churchman first, last, and all the time, was "the real man for the place." But there was no hurry. It would take time for the House of Bishops to act. "Consider! Consider, prayerfully, consider everything!" were the last words contained in the letter.

On the following day, and every day thereafter, came more letters—from Spencer, Schott, St. Clair, and other members of the Clericus of Presidio; from lay members, there and elsewhere, praying Dr. Anderson to accept and lead Presidio out of the wilderness. Still he hesitated until one day he received a final appeal from Bishop Turner, enclosing the letter he had re-

ceived from James Burchard Dudley, who was trying to defeat the action of the Presidio convention. Dr. Anderson did not know Dudley, except by reputation; but as Bishop Turner put it, "here is an outsider trying to run the church." Dr. Anderson read this with his lips tightly closed into a grim, straight line, and then he went to a ball game, throughout the nine innings of which he turned the matter over in his mind without knowing at any time how the score stood. After the game he went directly to a telegraph office and sent the following message to Bishop Turner:

"If my election is confirmed, I will accept the post as Bishop of Presidio."

It was long after the evening meal was over before he could bring himself to the point of telling his wife what he had done. He had been so noncommunicative on the subject of late that she had almost hoped herself into the belief that her bad dream was nothing but a nightmare after all. With nearly all of the dread feeling obliterated she was almost ready to believe that her happiness would go on smoothly to the end of her days. Considering this state of mind, the shock, dismay,

and sorrow, rolled into one bitter pill when she heard her husband say:

"Helen, I have accepted the call to Presidio."

Mrs. Anderson's lip quivered. If her life had depended upon it she could not have held back the deep sigh, which she tried to suppress. But she was a bishop's wife now, and she would do her part. She would not be a hold-back.

"All right, dearest," she replied with all the cheerfulness she could muster, "you know best."

Of course, the wardens and vestrymen of St. George's were disappointed, and so were all citizens of Hillsburg, because Dr. Anderson was universally liked by everybody, irrespective of race, color or creed. They protested seriously, and even pointed out the fact that his salary in Presidio would be a few thousand per year less, and whether or not he would draw his salary each month would depend upon his own ability as collector, as the diocesan treasury of Presidio was chronically broke. This argument was soon found to be without merit.

"There are other things besides money," said he, "I must go." All this time "Big Chief" Dudley's letter reposed in his pocket, and when he thought of it, his jaws came together with a snap.

The House of Bishops had unanimously confirmed his election; therefore, in due time, the pretty Hillsburg rectory was dismantled, and a few days later Bishop Anderson, his wife and their youngest son, Bud, arrived in Presidio. In driving from the depot to the house of a churchman, where, with his family, he would be a guest until his own household goods arrived, the host pointed out many points of interest, among others, a massive four-story building on Main Street, of which he said:

"That's *The Banner* Building, owned by James Burchard Dudley."

Dr. Anderson gazed steadily at the powerful structure, so typical of its owner, a veritable fastness of strength to behold, and then he replied quietly:

"Ah, indeed. I'm quite sure I have heard of the gentleman. He builds well. I must get acquainted with him." So calm and collected was the new bishop that his host looked up into his mobile face in perfect wonderment. Had he not heard? Was he aware of what he was saying? If not, a great awakening awaited him.

CHAPTER IV

ARRIVAL OF THE NEW BISHOP

SHORTLY after his arrival came the new bishop's consecration, when society and church came out in state. It was a great function and old St. Clement's was crowded to the doors with the best people of Presidio, also many came from other cities. There were a number of prominent churchmen, bishops, and clericals, headed by the venerable Bishop Turner, who conducted the ceremonies. It was he who received Dr. Anderson and consecrated him in his new work, and the new bishop was visibly affected by his tender attitude. He realized full well the tremendous responsibilities now resting upon his shoulders, and on the following sabbath, when he ascended the pulpit to deliver his first sermon, every eye was focussed upon him. Naturally, his fame as an orator, author and man had preceded his arrival, and much

was expected of him. With this in mind he abandoned the usual sermon and in its stead delivered a real heart-to-heart talk, which his auditors accepted as his message. He told them just what he wanted to do, how he wanted to do it, and what part the communicants of the church would have to play in his general scheme of upbuilding the diocese. There must be action, and constant striving for better things. He realized full well his shortcomings, and desired the hearty and active co-operation of every member of the church.

"Too long," said he, "has the diocese of Presidio been at the end of the church procession; the time has now come for it to move forward."

He welcomed the co-operation of all creeds and classes for anything looking toward the betterment of the city of Presidio as a community. He would have no favorites in church or secular affairs; he took things as he found them. Everything must be open and above board. Healthy opposition he would welcome, because always there were two sides to a question. And discussion would bring out the facts. In closing he said: "I am aware that there was opposition to my election, but that was to be expected. I am also aware that even after my election, which was legal, churchly, and fair in

every respect, certain letters were written by one of your most prominent citizens to various bishops, making statements which were malignant, untrue, and vicious. These letters were sent to prevent my confirmation."

Every eye was turned to the speaker, as he faced them—this man unafraid—who had openly dared to rebuke the redoubtable "Big Chief" Dudley in his own home town.

"I hold in my hand," continued the new bishop in measured tones, "one of those letters, and I desire to say now so that all may hear and know, *I am serving my God, and I shall wear no man's collar.*"

Everybody in the congregation knew what Bishop Anderson meant. They also knew exactly whom he meant, it was his intention that they should know, and that Mr. Dudley should know, just where he stood. There must be no misunderstanding, and, as the congregation filed out, there was a rush to congratulate him, but not a few, in their timid hearts, deprecated his attack on the "Big Chief." Why start a fight? They realized that a man had come "to court," but was he really looking for a scrap with Dudley the first thing? Dudley, the boss? Dudley, the "Big Chief?" No, the bishop was not looking for a

scrap with Dudley, or any one else. He was for peace. But, on the other hand, he wasn't running away from anything. He was merely standing in the middle of the road ready to act offensively or defensively as circumstances decreed—that was all.

Of course, "Big Chief" Dudley heard of this sermon, though he was not present in person. Kearney was there and heard and saw. Secretly, he admired the courage and poise of the man who would "beard the lion" if necessary, but he pitied him for the little knowledge he possessed regarding his adversary. Naturally, Dudley would grind this big bishop into bits—when the time came. No one could withstand the onslaught of his chief, bishop or what not. He'd "eat 'em alive and spit 'em on the ground," —that was Kearney's way of thinking. In due course, Kearney met the new bishop. The meeting took place at the bishop's church, just after service, and Kearney received a hearty welcome.

"Glad, indeed, to meet you, Mr. Kearney. I hope you will come often." There was no doubt in Kearney's mind of the bishop's sincerity.

"Dunno, Bishop," smiled Kearney, returning his firm handshake. "I work for Mr. Dudley."

"Oh, for Mr. Dudley, of *The Banner!* Good!

Come out again, and bring Mr. Dudley with you."

As Kearney walked away he was almost convulsed—the idea of Jim Dudley ever hearing Bishop Anderson preach, especially after he learned of the sermon of this particular morning! When he reached *The Banner* office, Dudley was busy with callers, so Kearney bided his time. When, finally, he did get to the "Big Chief," he found some one had preceded him with the news. Kearney wasn't sorry, he disliked the rôle of tale bearer; it was against his nature. Dudley was roaring mad.

"Kearney!" he shouted, as his right-hand man came in view, "did you hear what that new bishop said this morning? Gave *me the devil* from the pulpit."

"Sure, I heard it," said Kearney. "The pulpit's the proper place to 'give a man the devil,' "

"You heard it! How?"

"Oh, I was there; had nothing else to do, so just strolled out to see the new bishop."

"You heard him?" Dudley couldn't comprehend it.

"That's what I said, Jim; I heard him say he wouldn't hesitate to give it to you or any one else when the occasion demanded. And do you

know I believe he'd do it. Looks to me as if he was a *real man,* different from most bishops I've ever met."

Dudley gazed at Kearney in astonishment.

"What do you mean?" he growled, "are you sticking up for this bishop?" Dudley's fat face was fast becoming purple.

"Naw," answered the imperturbable Kearney, "not sticking up for him at all. He doesn't need any one to do that. I'm just telling you something. You had one coming to you for mixing up in this church scrap. All he did was to read one of those letters you wrote."

"He did," roared Dudley. "He did, eh? Well, I'll——"

"What'll you do?" interjected Kearney. "Try to raise a rumpus by bucking a church? You can't do that. No, not even you, Dudley. You only got what was coming to you, and I hope it teaches you a lesson."

"You talk like you're in love with the man."

"I dunno, but what I am, Jim; he's the only man in Presidio that ever dared to tell people where he stands without consulting you first. I believe he'd fight at the drop of the hat."

"Well, you keep away from him after this."

The "Big Chief" gave his head a jerk, as if to emphasize his command.

"Steady, Dudley, you pay me, and I do your work well." It was Kearney's time to talk now. "I'm useful to you or you wouldn't have me around; but you, nor no other man, can pin a badge on me, nor dictate with whom I may associate. Where I go Sunday is on my own time. Do you get me?" Kearney showed that he was very much in earnest.

Dudley did "get him" all right, and he hastened to pull away from such dangerous ground. Kearney was absolutely essential to his plans, especially now.

"All right, but don't let him hypnotize you."

"Sure, I won't," replied Kearney, going out nonchalantly, his good nature returning since he had had his say.

That night Dudley wrote two letters—one to the Rev. Schott of St. James' parish, and the other to the Rev. St. Clair, of St. Margaret's, informing them he was sorry he would not be able to continue his annual contributions to their parishes—five hundred dollars each. That was all. It was his first "kick-back" because of the election of Dr. Anderson over Dr. Lamb. Dudley was sore all through. His personal pride had

been ruffled over that affair, and now he had been attacked from the pulpit by the man who won. To be thwarted was nothing as compared with being flaunted in public, especially by a preacher. That Bishop Anderson had dared was beyond Jim Dudley's comprehension. Long after most people were asleep the "Big Chief" paced up and down his comfortable study, scheming and planning just what he would do to this bumptious cleric from the East.

CHAPTER V

THE SINEWS OF WAR

THINGS moved with amazing rapidity in Presidio when Bishop Anderson began his work. Within ten days after his consecration he held a combined meeting of his clericus and a number of prominent and wealthy men and women of the diocese. To them he outlined his plans. First, he demanded that the mortgage on the bishop's residence be wiped out. But that would be easy, a matter of sixteen thousand dollars—a mere bagatelle! Without giving them time to recover their senses, he calmly announced his plans for a new cathedral to replace the ramshackle St. Clement's, in which they were at present sitting—and he wanted it as soon as it could be erected—not two years hence. Work must start immediately!

"But, Bishop Anderson, all that will take

money," expostulated the treasurer of the diocese, "and at the present time we have on hand less than one thousand dollars; and, besides, we owe many times that amount."

"To be sure, my friends, I know that; but we are going to raise all of the money we need, at once."

"But how?"

"How?" The bishop's confident smile broadened into a good-natured laugh before replying. "Just the same as any business house would do in a similar situation. We are going to assess the stockholders."

"Stockholders!" gasped one communicant, "but we haven't any stockholders in this church."

"Oh, yes, we have, my friends. We are *all* stockholders. Not, perhaps, in a strictly legal sense, but in a business and churchly sense. You see, I take the position that the church has two entities, one spiritual, and the other business. The spiritual end the clergy will attend to, and in the business end every member must do his share. Now, we all know that the diocese of Presidio is in a very bad condition; that must be remedied at once, and the first step is the rebuilding of the cathedral. We must have a suitable

headquarters. That will awaken a just pride in our hearts and inspire us accordingly."

The very audacity of the bishop's proposal had a breath-catching effect upon the clericus, and carried them along in spite of their inward combativeness. They found themselves unable to withstand his forceful personality, and were practically swept off their feet.

"And, now, my friends," he concluded, "I will never ask a man or woman to do that which I would not do myself. Within the sound of my voice there is represented enough wealth to build this new cathedral and a magnificent hospital, as well, without inconvenience to any of you. My own purse is not as long as yours, and there is much demand upon it. But I will head the subscription list with a two-thousand dollar subscription. Here's my check for half of it. As for the balance, I hereby authorize the diocesan treasurer to pay same to the building committee out of my salary, twelve equal installments, all within one year from date. There, my friends, is the beginning. What are *you* going to do about it?"

Do? What must they do, when inspired by such a leader? Their new bishop was evidently a man who directed his campaign from the firing line, where the battle was hardest, rather than

from a comfortable headquarters miles away in the rear. Here was a general who shouted, "Come on!"—not "Go ahead!" The very air inside the old church suddenly became surcharged with the terrific force of the man. His example was infectious, and subscriptions came forth fast, and generous in amount. The bishop had asked for the mere trifle of one hundred thousand dollars, which, he said, would prove a starter! and the rest would come later! He expected the whole "plant" would cost a round quarter of a million, and told them so. When the subscriptions were all in and counted, they totalled a good third of the total sum required.

"Magnificent!" shouted the bishop, "but not enough; we want the rest of that first hundred thousand *now!*"

Once again the bishop carried his auditors along, careful himself to be their leader. His own contribution he increased five hundred dollars. He knew his power, and it was not his day to quit with half a victory. One man, "Old Hank" Lowell, as he was known to all Presidio, was a millionaire, many times over, and had subscribed a paltry thousand dollars—not even a "drop in the bucket" to him. He was reputed to be as close as one second following another, but the bishop

refused to allow him to live up to his reputation on this day. He had determined that now was the time to awaken this miserly man.

"My friends!" he exclaimed, "you truly have given me a splendid idea of just what the diocese of Presidio is going to be. You have contributed freely to this worthy cause; but——" and here he paused and allowed his gaze to travel around the room, finally resting it for one tense moment on Lowell.

"There are several men and women present," he continued, "who have not done their full duty. Once more I call upon them in the name of humanity, in the name of this diocese, in the name of this entire community, in the name of my God and their God, to do that which is right, and give from their earthly store a sum commensurate with the worthiness of this cause. Come, friends, now is the time to show your calibre."

"Hank" Lowell knew just what the bishop meant, and also whom he was after. He fidgetted in his seat, and tried to slide down below those in front of him. But the eyes of the bishop followed, and, ever his voice sounded the knell of dollars, he knew Lowell must yield. It was a terrible situation for Lowell. Moments seemed hours, as he squirmed in his seat. At length

something within him stirred, a feeling long since dead, but finally revived—Mammon gave way to the God of Christianity. He arose in his place and swayed unsteadily on his feet. His face became white and drawn, and his voice quivered, but there was a glitter of determination in his eyes, as he opened his mouth to speak.

"Bishop Anderson, and you, my friends, I ain't much of a talker and I haven't given this diocese as much as I might in days gone by, but there hasn't been much of a diocese to give anything to. Now things begin to look different, and we have a leader at our head. Bishop," and here his voice arose to a high pitch, "I'll subscribe twenty-five thousand dollars, and I'll write out my check now!"

There was one great voice of approval when "Old Hank" Lowell "walked the plank." But he did it bravely. Once started he never looked back. Naturally, everybody was astounded. It was an unheard-of thing for the miserly man to loosen his purse strings to such an extent. After the roar of approval died away, all present sat as if stunned, until, led by the bishop, another storm of approbation broke loose. For the first time in all his long life "Old Hank" found himself a hero, and when the meeting broke up

Bishop Anderson had checks and pledges for a good half of his total needs. It was a great day, indeed, for him, and for the church, and for Presidio.

Of course, the news of the bishop's success became at once the talk of the town. The papers slapped it on their first pages under double-column scare heads. Even *The Banner* gave it prominence, particularly concerning "Hank" Lowell's big contribution, the fact of which was first taken with a large grain of salt.

"Must have jimmied it out of him," observed Kearney to Dudley.

"Bah! nothing but hypnotism, and a new broom. He'll play out."

"Pretty good hyping," grinned Kearney, "when a man can make a bunch come across for a hundred and thirty thousand in one day—and to build a church—*wow!* I wish I had his system."

Next morning bright and early, numerous callers were on hand to congratulate and cheer the bishop. Among them were the Rev. Schott and St. Clair. They told him that Dudley had withdrawn his support from their parishes, and how dreadfully they needed the money.

"He did, eh?" ejaculated the bishop. "Well,

I'll call on him soon, and see if I can't bring him back into the fold."

"Better keep away, Bishop—at least until he cools off. You know he hasn't recovered from the fact that you beat Lamb."

"Nonsense, gentlemen, I am not afraid of Dudley. Maybe a visit will be a good thing for both of us."

It was not Dudley who worried the bishop on this beautiful morning after the big event of his life. The thing that bothered him was where to find a place to worship in while St. Clement's was being rebuilt. Many parishioners lived near the old church, and it was quite a distance to another of the same denomination. But no such thing as defeat of any project was in the bishop's mind this day. He thought quickly, and, strange as was his final determination, he acted upon it instantly. As quickly as he could get there he called upon Rabbi Edwin Wise, who presided over Bnai Brith, Congregation of Israel. His beautiful church edifice fronted on Lennox Boulevard, only two blocks away from St. Clement's, and he personally was a progressive, high-minded Jew—a leader of his race. He had met Bishop Anderson some years before in the East, and admired him greatly. The Rabbi was one of

the very first to welcome him upon his arrival in Presidio.

"Rabbi Wise," said the bishop, after greetings had been exchanged, "would you consider allowing the parish of St. Clement's to use your temple for worship on Sunday mornings during the time the cathedral is being rebuilt?"

"Would I? Why, my dear Bishop, I shall be delighted." There could be no halting and fiddling between such high-minded gentlemen, whereupon from his pulpit Sunday morning next Bishop Anderson announced the new place of worship.

It is easy to imagine the consternation of the parishioners. A gentile parish worshiping in a Jewish Temple! Jew and Gentile under the same roof! It makes your breath come quick to think about it, but the bishop minced no words when he saw that some of his flock seemed inclined to argue the matter.

"No use, my friends," he told them; "the Jew believes in the Old Testament—his God is *our* God. We go a little further and accept the New Testament, that's the only difference. We will worship in the Temple the next Sunday and every Sunday thereafter until our own church is rebuilt." As usual, the bishop won.

The following Sunday, for the first time in the history of the Christian world, a Jewish temple sheltered a Christian congregation, and there was spoken the glorious Apostles' Creed, handed down through generations of time. That greatest and most beautiful reiteration of faith, "I believe."

The temple was crowded, many coming out of curiosity to see the man who dared defy custom. It was evident that some meddlers in attendance expected to witness a big row of some kind. The newspapers had made a sensation of the matter, and no one would have been surprised if a fist fight actually took place. Every move made by the bishop was eagerly watched, but after an hour of orderly, Christian-like behavior, and a splendid sermon in the bargain, the outsiders opened their eyes to the fact that a powerful leader stood before them. They realized that they were witnessing a wonderful scene—and, while they had come to scoff, they remained to worship, along with the rest.

CHAPTER VI

NEW TROUBLES ARISE

It was not very long before Bishop Anderson was one of the best-known men in Presidio. He and his charming wife became great favorites socially, and among the men folk the bishop came into his own. The younger men liked him because he was red-blooded, athletic, a patron of baseball, racing, boxing, wrestling, and all the sports which go to make up a manly man. The older men liked him for his fairness of mind and his unflinching championship of right. As one man put it, "Bishop Anderson stands one hundred per cent square." The bishop was not preachy. He believed in his church, but not in such a bigoted way that he could not see goodness in all churches.

"Any clean-living human being can take his chances with God without being afraid." That

was his way of looking at man's destiny in the great hereafter.

Kearney and the bishop became quite friendly, and met on various occasions. Kearney's employer, however, held himself aloof, and the bishop made no overtures. Dudley's spirit rankled in his bosom by reason of the bishop's popularity, and his petty soul failed to rise above such feelings. He merely bided his time, and hoped for an opportunity when he could come out and fight the bishop openly—not as a churchman, but as a man. He did not want him around, and he decided to make Presidio too hot to hold him—and he wanted to do it in his own way. Bishop Anderson was a thorn in his side, which he would remove in time. Unexpectedly, his opportunity came sooner than he expected.

When Bishop Anderson had been in Presidio a few months he received a call from three prominent citizens—Michael Flanagan, president of the American Gas Company; Rabbi Wise, and Dr. Arnold, of the First Presbyterian Church.

"Well, gentlemen!" exclaimed the bishop, as the delegation filed into his study and confronted him, "this is, indeed, a pleasant surprise. I am glad to see you. Sit down and make yourselves at home." The easy manner of this hos-

pitable speech in no way discovered to his guests that the bishop was, indeed, very much surprised at their presence in his home. To further impress them with his perfect peace of mind, he passed around cigars and cigarettes, and lighted his faithful old pipe. This done, he waited several tense moments for some one to state the object of their visit.

"Bishop Anderson, our mission is a peculiar one," began Mr. Flanagan, with a show of embarrassment.

"Come right to the point, Mr. Flanagan."

"Well," said Mr. Flanagan thoughtfully, looking at the tip of his burning cigar, "since you came to Presidio your actions have stamped you as a man of great force. A natural leader not only of your own church, but of men in all walks of life."

"You flatter me, Mr. Flanagan," smilingly interjected the bishop.

"If the truth is flattery, then I do. But the results you have accomplished speak for themselves."

Dr. Arnold and Rabbi Wise nodded approvingly.

"Now," continued Mr. Flanagan, "upon the occasion of your first sermon here you said you

wore no man's collar. Do you know, Bishop, that was the best thing said in Presidio in twenty years."

"And why, pray?" asked the bishop.

"Because that was the first time Jim Dudley had been told where he got off."

"Dudley! you astonish me. My remark wasn't applicable to Dudley personally, but to a class of men who think they can run everything on earth without consulting the feelings of others."

"You hit Dudley's character to a dot, Bishop Anderson," interjected Dr. Arnold. "He has been doing just that ever since he came to Presidio, and has ridden, rough-shod, over us on every occasion—and now the time has come for him to be stopped."

"And, Bishop," added Rabbi Wise, "*you* are the man to stop him."

Bishop Anderson was astounded when these gentlemen, representing, as they did, three different religious faiths—Catholic, Presbyterian and Jewish—made their statement.

"But, gentlemen!" he exclaimed, "I do not get your idea. I know from what I have heard since coming here that Mr. Dudley is a power. But he must be an unusually brilliant man—a strong one —to have done all that is claimed for him."

"He is strong, Bishop," said Flanagan, "and brilliant, but he has become obsessed with the idea that he is impregnable. Through his paper he has built up a machine that pursues its way, crushing all opposition into dust."

"And you expect me to offer myself to be crushed in the same way?" smiled the bishop.

"No, not crushed, Bishop," said Flanagan, leaning across the desk and speaking very tensely. "We expect you to lead a movement which will beat him. Beat him—at his own game."

"How?" tersely asked the bishop. He was all attention.

"Bear with me a moment, and I'll be as brief as possible," replied Flanagan. Dr. Arnold and Rabbi Wise drew their chairs closer that they might catch every word, for the spokesman knew the "Big Chief" as no other in Presidio—save Kearney. It was a dramatic scene, and Flanagan continued:

"Dudley absolutely controls his paper, as you know. He is rich in real estate, has bank stock, and is interested in many other profitable ventures. He positively dominates the political situation. The mayor, Schultz, fawns upon him. The speaker of the council is Patrick J. Kearney—Dudley's right hand—and the speaker

under our municipal system is even more powerful than the mayor. Kearney puts through the council any measure Dudley asks for, and Schultz signs it. The councilmen are of the usual calibre found in politics—some good, some bad, and some worse. It makes no difference to Dudley whether they are Republicans or Democrats—he moulds them all to his will. Our city government is a joke—'Presidio' spells 'Dudley'—and 'Dudley' spells 'Presidio.' "

"That is a deplorable state of affairs, gentlemen," gravely interjected the bishop.

"It truly is," continued Flanagan, "and one which must not continue, if we are to have independence of thought and individual liberty in our city." Flanagan paused a moment, as if weighing his words. "Now I come direct to the point," he continued. "Dudley, not content with what he already possesses, now aspires to own the gas company of Presidio."

"But, Mr. Flanagan, I understood that your company, the American, owned the gas plant."

"It does, Bishop Anderson—now. But here's the peculiar situation. Our company was formed twenty-five years ago, when Presidio was a village. We didn't have much money, but after we secured our franchise, we began to build what has

since become a great system. Of course, as the population grew and the city expanded, we had to meet the demand by extending our system. That required a large amount of money, so we increased our capital stock and put out bond issues, as the exigencies of the case demanded. Contrary to most enterprises of this kind, the bonds and stocks were largely sold right here among our own citizens. These securities were not valuable in the first instance, because all the money we made of necessity must be put back in the plant immediately—no chance for dividends whatever. The change from kerosene light to gas, you must know, was very expensive. Still, there was no complaint from our stockholders, and, of course, our bondholders always received their interest. Only during the past ten years have we been paying anything to our stockholders. Our treasury just now is prospering to a point where dividends can be increased in the near future. Our financial standing is, at last, first class. Our long struggle to get on our feet is over."

"You are to be congratulated, my dear Mr. Flanagan, on such a splendid showing," said the bishop. "It's good to know that at last the cor-

poration is on its own financial legs, and that the stockholders are to be rewarded."

"Thank you, Bishop," continued Flanagan, "but I don't claim much credit. My father built the system and I succeeded him when he died ten years ago. The American *is* different from most corporations. It's clean, and we try to keep it so. But now comes Dudley. He sees the value of our plant and wants it."

"Yes, but how can he get it, Mr. Flanagan? From your own statement your property is valuable, and the dividends you are paying make your stock worth above par. I don't know much about business, but I do know that. So if Mr. Dudley wants your system, he'll have to pay a goodly sum; so large, in fact, I doubt if even his plethoric purse can stand it." Flanagan arose and paced the floor of the bishop's study.

"Buy!" he exploded. "Buy the American! Jim Dudley—buy it! Huh! You don't know him—he doesn't intend to buy it. *He's going to take it!*" Flanagan paused in front of the bishop.

"Men of Dudley's type don't buy—they take!" he shouted.

"You mean take it, without aye, yes, or no? What about the law?"

"Law!" interjected Rabbi Wise, "law is the

rich man's convenience in a case like this. Wait until you hear the rest of the story. Go on, Mr. Flanagan!"

"The franchise of any company, Bishop Anderson, is its most valuable asset; take that away, and you cut the ground from under its feet."

"Yes, but you *have* a franchise, Mr. Flanagan —you've just said so."

"True, we have a franchise, but for only twenty-five years—*and it runs out next October.*"

"But surely a renewal will be granted?"

"Not if Jim Dudley can stop it, and under present conditions he can probably do so. Listen, Bishop—the granting of the franchise is in the hands of the present city council, and Dudley controls that council. Don't forget, his man Kearney is its chairman."

"But the council—would it dare refuse your company a franchise upon the showing you have just made?"

"Refuse!" cried Flanagan passionately. "Refuse! Why, that council would crucify their mothers, if Dudley said the word!"

"What a deplorable state of affairs!" exclaimed the bishop—"and in a progressive city like Presidio! I can't imagine such an outrage."

"Wait," again began Flanagan, "wait until you hear the rest of his scheme. If the American fails in renewing its franchise, its most valuable asset becomes worthless; its stock is dead, the integrity of the bonds is guaranteed by the value of the plant, which is more than ample for the purpose. The bondholders won't lose a penny, but the stockholders will lose everything—and that would spell financial ruin to thousands of citizens here in Presidio, who have invested their all in this stock. Our stock is widely held, much of it being in the hands of widows and orphans."

Flanagan, thoroughly worked up, paused a moment, trying to collect himself. Dr. Arnold and Rabbi Wise listened in silence, but their tense expression showed them to be as vitally interested in the recital as Flanagan. They knew every word he said was true.

"Now, Bishop, here's Dudley's scheme. A new company, called the 'National,' is to be formed. The corporation papers are already drawn up. Dudley is to be the principal backer of this company; the present council will give the new company a franchise for fifty years. The American not having a franchise, will, perforce, be out of business. The *bondholders* will apply for a receivership, the new company will buy the plant

for a song, the bondholders will receive stocks and securities for twice their old value in the new—and present *stockholders* will hold the bag."

"And you say that can be done *legally?*"

"Legally! Why, Bishop Anderson, the law will not only protect them in their scheme, but it will assist them. I tell you, all the financial highbinders are not in Wall Street. We have a few here in Presidio, and Dudley is king."

"Doesn't Dudley own any American securities, Mr. Flanagan?"

"Own any!" cried Flanagan sarcastically. "I should say he does. More than a million in our bonds, and a few of his henchmen own as much more. He controls them. He or his man Friday will ask for a receivership. *They* are not going to lose anything—that's not their game. It's the poor investors in the stock—the people who helped build the system, and who have waited long years for dividends, who will lose."

"But, gentlemen," said the bishop, rising; "cannot the action of this council be delayed until after the next election? When is that?"

"November."

"Well, can't that be done?"

"No, Bishop, it can't. Our only hope is to work on this council."

"How? From what you have told me it seems that such a thing would be well nigh impossible."

"That brings us down to the main object of our visit to you. We want to form a movement—hold a series of meetings—and so arouse the public spirit that this council will see the handwriting on the wall, and refuse to do Dudley's bidding. That's our only chance, Bishop."

"Surely, I am in sympathy with such a movement, but what specific thing can I do?" As if by common impulse all three visitors arose and confronted their host, each seeming to be fired with a desire to talk. But it was Flanagan who spoke——

"Bishop Anderson," said he deliberately, "every great movement must have a leader. We want you to lead this movement."

"Me!" exclaimed the bishop; "you want me to lead it! Why, gentlemen!"

"Wait, Bishop," broke in Rabbi Wise; "we want you to lead it for two reasons. First, you have the natural ability and courage—we know that. Second, you are new in Presidio. Third, *you* have no prejudices, save for things which are right. You are the one man who can beat Dudley!" The bishop started to interrupt, but the Rabbi would not be gainsayed. "What Mr.

Flanagan says about poor people owning this stock is true. Many of my flock hold some of it, and Dudley's scheme would cause untold misery."

"And I," said Dr. Arnold, "agree with my good brother the Rabbi, and also with Mr. Flanagan. Members of my church are as vitally interested as we."

"Bishop," interjected Flanagan, "I'm not much of a churchman, but I am a Catholic in faith, and I can promise you the hearty co-operation of my church. It will be a combination wherein religious differences are wiped out and racial prejudices forgotten. We will be fighting each with and for the other. Please do not refuse. We need your help. You are the man of all men in Presidio to organize the forces to avert this great calamity. Come, Bishop, we can't make it without your help."

Bishop Anderson slowly refilled and relighted his old briar pipe, and then he paced up and down the room, hands behind his back, puffing so vigorously that he was soon enveloped in a cloud of smoke. The proposition was, indeed, a serious one. He could not neglect his own church, but here were brothers of other creeds calling upon him for help. And, too, another picture came into his mind, that of the general misery which would



"Very well, gentlemen, I'll consent, but I want it distinctly understood that everything we do must be open and above board," said Bishop Anderson

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ensue if Dudley succeeded. That would be horrible, indeed. Widows and orphans! Widows and orphans! For many long minutes he continued his solemn tread about the big room. He was making sure within himself just where his duty lay. There must be no mistake about this. Finally he mumbled audibly the words—widows and orphans—and then abruptly faced the committee.

"Very well, gentlemen," said he, "I'll consent to lead your movement to defeat Dudley, but I want it distinctly understood, everything we do must be open and above board. I am not a politician nor a statesman, *but I do fight fair.*"

Great was the satisfaction of all when the big decision was reached by the bishop. There was a ring of pure joy in the shout that went up from Flanagan, who rushed forward and embraced the prelate.

"Thank God!" he roared, "with the bishop at the front of us, we'll win. It's 'Little Chief' Dudley he'll be when we get through with him."

CHAPTER VII

THE MASS MEETING

THE next day *The Tribune* and *The Scimitar*, the two opposition papers to Dudley's *Banner*, came out with an announcement that there would be a mass meeting that evening in Convention Hall to discuss the gas franchise situation; and that this meeting would be presided over by Bishop Anderson, who had lately arrived in Presidio. Ordinarily, *The Tribune* and *The Scimitar* did not wield much influence in Presidio, but now, after they had heard Flanagan's story of the interview that he, Rabbi Wise and Dr. Arnold had had with Bishop Anderson the day previous, they realized something was going to be started in Presidio that would give them plenty of news for some months to come.

There was a meeting of their two managing editors, and for the campaign about to start they agreed to make a combination and play it strong.

The Tribune, being a morning paper, had the advantage in priority of announcement, and the next morning its front page carried a double-column leader dealing with the American Gas case and the new franchise. It made a vicious attack on Dudley, exposing his hand, all of which the citizens already knew; told of Bishop Anderson's activity since coming to Presidio and of his consenting to lead this fight. At noon, the first edition of *The Scimitar* appeared on the streets, and in a more sensational manner they played up the news. *The Scimitar* had pictures of the bishop—of Dudley—of Flanagan, and sketches of decrepit old men wending their way "over the hills to the poor house." It was pathetic, and caused a sensation in a mild way—a sensation, not on account of the agitation, but because Bishop Anderson had consented to lead the fight against Dudley. The staggering thing about it all was—that any one would dare fight him. They had so long been bullied and bulldozed by this man, that Presidio citizens had ceased to believe any one would have the courage to fight him. Older men shook their heads in a deprecatory manner; younger ones grinned and said: "Go to it, Bishop!"

The Banner had not been giving much attention to the franchise matter. Dudley sat en-

trenched behind the thought that he had things all his own way. The council would grant the new company the franchise—he would strangle the old, and add another scalp to his belt. Opposition to him—pooh! There wasn't any such thing. His contempt for the *Tribune* and *Scimitar* was so great that ordinarily he wouldn't even allow copies of them brought into his building. But to-day things were different.

Kearney was the first to learn the news. He grinned when he bought a *Tribune* and read the leader. Taking the paper with him he went into Dudley's office.

"Morning, Dudley, seen to-day's *Tribune?*"

"Seen it?" snapped Dudley. "What do I want to see the *Tribune* for?"

"It's giving it to you this morning."

"That's nothing new. It generally does. But what does it amount to?"

"Nothing, heretofore," replied the laconic Kearney, "but this time it's a wee bit different. Bishop Anderson's heading a movement to fight you on the franchise question. First meeting to-night at Presidio Hall. Bet it'll be a hummer! Here's the paper—want to see it?"

"What's that you say?" roared the chief, ris-

ing from his desk and taking the paper. He read in astonishment.

"Well, great Scott! what do you know about that!"

"Wrong name, Jim; my name's Kearney," grinned his henchman.

Dudley read every word, a grim look settled over his face.

"Now, Kearney, I've *got* him. *Now,* I can fight him, and fight him I will. Why, the little picayune! The nerve of him—to tackle me!"

"Oh, I dunno, Jim, the bishop isn't such a little cuss. About six feet two I reckon."

"But mentally, I mean. There's where he's small."

"You're kidding yourself. And, besides, a little chap named David once bounced a rock off of Goliath's head. You've heard of that, haven't you?"

"Shut up," snarled Dudley. Kearney merely shrugged his shoulders. He knew Dudley. "Now," continued Dudley, "he's out in the open and I can smash him. You take a couple of good men to that meeting to-night. Sit in the audience —if there is one—and hear what's going on. And to-morrow morning's *Banner* can fire the first

shot—and it'll be a hot one. I'll write it myself after you come back.

"There'll be a crowd, all right. Bishop Anderson generally draws one."

"Sure, but they will only come out of curiosity. After I get through with him to-morrow, he won't be able to get out a baker's dozen."

"Maybe that's true," said Kearney, as he went out, "but I doubt it."

Presidio sizzled with excitement that afternoon. Every one wondered what would be "Big Chief Dudley's" first move. That he would fight the bishop and fight him hard, no one doubted. "Wait until to-morrow," said the people. "Wait." And they did, but in waiting about ten thousand of them wended their way to Presidio Hall to see the fight started.

"Idle curiosity," perhaps, as Dudley put it. But before that meeting was over, deep down in their hearts, every one in that vast audience knew a fight to the death had been started on Jim Dudley; knew that either he or Bishop Anderson would have to give in, and most of those who heard the bishop, opined he would not be the one to first cry, "Hold, enough!"

The great hall, built largely through the enterprise of *The Banner*, seated 5,000, and the

building was filled to overflowing, when, at eight o'clock, Bishop Anderson ascended the platform, and called the meeting to order. He had with him Rabbi Wise and several other prominent Jews; Dr. Arnold, the Presbyterian; Father Leahy, a Catholic clergyman, and Mr. Flanagan, besides many others of more or less prominence.

Flanagan was the first speaker, and, in a calm, dispassionate manner, he reviewed the history of the American. Told of its early struggles, of its present prosperity, and of the bright future in store for the company and its stockholders, if they were allowed to proceed. Flanagan was not an orator, just a plain business man—an honest one be it said—and the facts and figures he presented sank home. His hearers knew he spoke the truth.

Then came Rabbi Wise, Father Leahy, and Dr. Arnold, each of whom delivered his message to the people, and adjured them to be strong in the fight just begun. There was some perfunctory enthusiasm, but the audience was waiting for the bishop. It was about ten o'clock when he arose and faced that vast assemblage—the proletariat of Presidio. The big auditorium was as still as death, as this commanding figure, with tense, drawn face, stood before them at "Arma-

geddon—battling for the Lord." It was not an oratorical display; just a plain, simple, strong talk of a man unafraid, who was willing to lead them in a fight for their rights, and—for some of them—the very right to live.

Every one listened intently as the bishop reviewed events as they had been presented to him since his arrival in Presidio. He spoke feelingly of the natural beauty of the city, of its great resources, its brilliant future. He wasn't even a voter here yet—he knew that—but he was a citizen none the less, and anything affecting the general welfare of the community, affected him. He had been informed that one man was responsible for the deplorable condition of affairs; one man entrenched by the power of money and his paper was endeavoring to wield the sceptre of absolute control over them; one man proposed to take from the people that which was theirs; one man backed by fictitious legal rights, proposed to control the lighting situation in Presidio. And why? Did he need money? No, he had millions of that. No, not money. Power? No, he wielded a tremendous power through his paper. Why then? The bishop paused a moment, and then said—"I'll tell you why, my friends—for the simple satisfaction of his inordinate personal ambition,

and his lust for gain. He has you garotted, and, ogre-like, sits turning the thumbscrew until he knows that with another turn or two the spinal cord of Presidio's backbone will be reached and cracked. Then, he will be absolute. I believe in fighting in the open. I have told you all these things and every word I have spoken you know is the truth. I haven't mentioned this man's name —you all know it. But for fear some may think I stand afraid, I hurl it at you. I mean James Burchard Dudley!" There was a gasp from the audience. Applause started. The bishop raised his hands.

"Wait," he cried, "don't applaud yet. It's not time, and, besides, applause is but an empty expression of present enthusiasm, and to be effective must needs be backed up by deeds."

Then the good bishop paid his respects to the members of the present city council, most of whom were in the audience. In no uncertain terms did he call upon them to do their full duty by refusing to do the bidding of this man. He appealed to their honor, their manhood, their sense of right and justice to all mankind. He appealed to them not as a churchman, but as a man, just one of them; yea, even as the humblest

and poorest citizen might have appealed—to do right and follow their conscience.

In closing, the bishop said: "And now, gentlemen, permit me to say I am not fighting Jim Dudley—you call him 'The Big Chief'—as a single individual, but I am fighting any system of government which will permit one man to wield such an arbitrary power; I am fighting any system of legal procedure, which will throw the protection of the law around such nefarious schemes —the law which is supposed to be just and right, and the poor man's protection. I call upon you to go for that council, hit them hard—blows with the force of the hammer of Thor—give them no rest day or night, until you have wrung from them a promise to defeat Dudley's company, and renew the American franchise. See them, 'phone them, write them; make their very life a burden of protest, until the light breaks in upon their hide-bound minds. Work up public opinion, arouse your neighbors, make these men understand they must 'render unto Cæsar those things that are Cæsar's'; and the result will be a better Presidio, a more enlightened citizenship; our city will be our joy, our comfort and our pride, and God will be with you in this fight."

There was a moment's silence—tense to a de-

gree—and then the applause started. Wave after wave of it rolled back and forth across that great auditorium. Men leaped to their feet, slapped each other on the back, screamed and shrieked. They crowded around the platform shaking the hand of the bishop.

Rabbi Wise, Dr. Arnold, and Father Leahy congratulated him in warm terms; a photographer of *The Scimitar* secured a flashlight of these four clerics, Episcopalian, Jew, Presbyterian and Catholic—with hands clasped. One man, an old soldier, stood up on a chair and began to sing "America." One by one the audience joined in, and, finally, ten thousand human voices were singing from their very hearts "My Country 'tis of Thee." Of the members of the Council, some stayed, already convinced. The majority sneaked out to await further orders from the "Big Chief," who ruled them with a rod of iron.

Out of idle curiosity had come many—but most of them went away firm believers and *they would work on their councilmen.*

CHAPTER VIII

THE APPROACHING STORM

ONE of Bishop Anderson's auditors, who listened with more than passing interest, was Kearney—Patrick J. Kearney—the one man there representing Dudley in his personal capacity. The two reporters concealed in the audience came to him after the meeting was over for instructions.

"Beat it," he tersely said, "write up your notes, and turn them in to the city editor. Better keep away from the old man. I'll see him when I come over." And they did "beat it," glad of a chance to escape.

All through Bishop Anderson's masterly address, Kearney sat, one leg crossed over the other, leaning slightly forward, and meditatively chewing tobacco. Once or twice he thought the bishop saw and recognized him—perhaps he did. You may be sure the bishop *knew* Kearney was there.

Kearney realized every word the bishop said was true. Dudley *was* an arrogant, over-bearing man. But he held the reins in his hand—he was the driver. Kearney also knew that. In his long career with Dudley, he had seen men rise up to fight "The Big Chief" only to be beaten in return. But he respected this man, this churchman, who was not afraid to stand up in the presence of that vast audience, and call a spade a spade. Once Kearney thought, "If that bishop had happened around here about ten years ago, before Jim Dudley got all his power, I'm thinking he would have whaled the tar out of him, but he's too late now.

"Every wave," reasoned Kearney, "that goes up, must come down, and, in coming down, must break into spray and foam, and go back to the ocean from whence it came.

"Still, I dunno," he further thought, as he walked over to *The Banner* building, "there may be more back of this movement than we imagine. That bishop certainly is a rip-roarer for stirring things up. No discounting that."

When he entered Dudley's office he found the chief and Mayor Schultz in conversation. A look at Schultz and one could see just what he was—a puppet—a mere political tool, subservient to a

degree. Dudley whirled in his chair, facing Kearney as he came in, the seriousness of the man's face gave him an inkling of what was to come.

"Howdy, Mayor," said Kearney, shaking Schultz's limp hand.

Dudley was a man of very few words, and the mayor less—when his master was around.

"Well," snapped Dudley.

"No 'well' about it," retorted Kearney. "Dudley, I've been attending political pow-wows and conventions all my life—but consarn me if I ever saw one like this meeting to-night. It was more like a religion—a new religion."

"Cut the preaching and get down to facts," snarled Dudley.

"I'm just giving them to you," said Kearney, undisturbed by his chief's irrascibility. He never let that worry him a bit—"and I mean what I say, when I say 'new religion.' Here were four men all representing different faiths, Catholic, Jew, Presbyterian and Episcopalian on the same platform, fighting for the same things. If that isn't brotherhood of man, what is? Huh?"

"Now, will you stop giving me your thoughts on religion, and tell me just what happened?"

"Sure I will," grinned Kearney. And in his

own plain way he related the incidents of the meeting. Dudley was walking up and down, while Kearney talked, and the mayor sat meekly by, never missing a word. Mayor Schultz, naturally, wanted another term, and that evening Dudley had promised it to him. When Kearney finished telling of the meeting, he turned to the mayor, and said:

"Schultz, if I were you, when I went home tonight, I'd sit down and write an application to some reliable house asking for a job. You're going to need it after the November election."

The mayor was much downcast, and, making a hasty adieu, he did go home, much troubled in mind—not in conscience, since he had none.

Dudley was furious when he heard of the bishop's outspoken attack on him. All semblance of reason fled. He must win now, if only to satisfy his pride in beating this man, who dared to openly flaunt him in Presidio. He had faith in his man, Kearney—knew he could control him, as long as he remained in his employ. He knew also, through Kearney, he could control enough votes in the council to put through the franchise, or any other matter, and he also knew Mayor Schultz would sign.

"Confound him," he roared, "he's got to!"

"Sure, I know that, Jim, but better slow up a while."

"Not for a minute," said Dudley with a sneering growl, "if that bishop wants a fight, he can have it."

"Well, he ain't declining the issue, as I can see," replied Kearney. There was a moment's silence, as Dudley paced up and down.

"Jim," continued Kearney, "back in October, '71, an old Irish lady named O'Leary, living in Chicago, owned a cow. She went out to milk it one evening after dark, and took with her an ordinary coal-oil lamp. Mother O'Leary and the cow weren't on very good terms that night, because the cow let go and kicked over the lamp. Remember what happened?"

"Surely, I remember," answered Dudley, "but what's that got to do with this case?"

"Just this—I somehow feel like that scene is being re-enacted right here in Presidio, and Bishop Anderson is playing the part of the cow—and this franchise question is the lamp. Look out for the blaze he starts!"

"What's the matter with you? Getting chicken-hearted?"

"Naw, Jim, just sensible—that's all."

"Well, keep such thoughts to yourself, and

listen to me. I'm in this fight and I'm going to win. Now, as a starter, we're going to find out all about this bishop. Everything from the cradle to the present time. Every man has a weak spot. I have one—you have one—Dr. Lamb has one. So has Bishop Anderson. *Get his!* Comb his record; use wires, letters, telephones, money," and, pausing a moment—"use women, if necessary, to get him, but get him—do you understand?"

"Sure, I understand," said Kearney, "but look out the bishop doesn't get you!"

"Bah!" retorted Dudley, "a preacher and a scribbler get me?" The idea was so amusing he burst out laughing.

"All right, Jim, it's your funeral, not mine; but I warn you—look out! Good-night—see you in the morning."

"Good-night, Kearney," said Dudley, seating himself at his desk. Then he wrote a scathing editorial for the next day's *Banner,* one calculated to shrivel Bishop Anderson's soul—afterward he called Dennis, his office boy, to carry it out to the editorial room. This done, he motored home, a prey to his thoughts.

CHAPTER IX

MR. CATON DISAPPEARS

THE issues of *The Tribune* and *Scimitar*, announcing the meeting just described, were tame, indeed, compared to those of the day following, when these papers gave the details of that meeting. Their front pages and editorial columns fairly sizzled with the news. *The Scimitar* was particularly bitter in its attack on Dudley. For years this paper had led a hand-to-mouth sort of an existence, just hanging on, as it were, by its eyelashes. Its pages were largely made up of sensationalism, sports and comics. True, it had attacked Dudley on more than one occasion, but it was like a flea trying to bite an elephant—the hide was too thick to be affected by the bite. Dudley had scorned it; forbade his paper even replying to *The Scimitar's* attacks. But now things were different. Here was a real, live, vital issue, on which to fight him, and on top of that the fight

was to be led by a man different in every way from any other individual who had dared to take up the cudgels against Dudley. A man of intellect, of learning, of distinguished ability, of unblemished reputation and character, and a leader of a great church, and of undoubted and proven courage. It was a rare situation, indeed, and *The Scimitar* played it for all it was worth. It was fighting for a good cause—an appealing one. The people were concerned.

On *The Scimitar's* first page was a fine, halftone reproduction of the flashlight picture of the four clergymen clasping hands on the platform of Presidio Hall. Over this was a flaming caption in red—"The Millenium Near. A New Religion!" It covered half of the page. On the second page was a cartoon, representing Dudley as a Judas, selling the citizens of Presidio for gold. Under this, in type you could read a block away, was a line—*"The 20th Century Judas Iscariot, Selling His Soul for Pelf."*

The whole story was printed in lurid colors, and in burning words. The effect was shown immediately, because street sales of *The Scimitar* jumped from 2,000 or 3,000 per day to over 20,000, and the newsboys reaped a rich harvest.

But *The Tribune* and *The Scimitar* were not

alone in their glory. *The Banner* made its appearance on the streets, and, while its leaders were less sensational than *The Scimitar*, and there was a lack of cartoons, they were none the less direct and to the point. Dudley was fighting, and the editorial in *The Banner*, written by himself, was vitriolic to a degree. There was satire, ridicule and abuse, such as only a man of Dudley's ability could write. He was at one great disadvantage, however; he was not in a position to give facts. All he could do was to inject his powerful personality and bulldog tenacity into the fray, and hope to win by brute force. He had done all these things before, and had beaten everybody. Why couldn't he do the same thing now, and beat this man? "A preacher! Huh!" he thought, "I'll pulverize him."

Dudley's thoughts were not pleasant, as he came out of his house to go downtown. The shrill cry of a newsboy greeted his ears, "Extra! *Tribune*—all about franchise fight. First blood for Bishop Anderson!" It was an unusual thing for newsboys to be crying their papers in the residential district, save on Sundays, or when some big item of news came out. Evidently, this was a big item. Dudley sent his chauffeur out to buy a copy of the paper, and when the man returned

the chief went into his house, locked himself in his den, and read every word. Then, stuffing it in his pocket, he was driven down to his office. There was a grim look on his face, and when acquaintances bowed to him, he acknowledged with a very curt nod.

Bursting into his office like a cyclone, he nearly knocked Dennis, the waiting office boy, off his feet. Throwing his auto cap and gloves at the youngster, he said:

"Where's Mr. Kearney?"

"Out in the city room," replied the boy.

"Get him!" he commanded in gruff tones.

"Yes, sir," said Dennis, beating a hasty retreat.

In a few minutes, Kearney, cool and imperturbable, came in the door. He knew why he had been summoned.

"Morning, Chief!"

"Morning, Kearney," nodded Dudley; "seen the papers this morning?"

"Sure. You?"

"Yes, I have."

"Where'd you get 'em?" wonderingly asked Kearney.

"Where'd I get 'em? Where do you suppose? I bought them."

The idea was amusing to Kearney. "You bought *The Tribune!*" he exclaimed; "well, by jinks, you *are* worked up, aren't you, Jim?"

"No, I'm not worked up—I'm just fighting mad, that's all."

"You show it, Dudley; and the worst part of it is, for once the opposition have got you hipped. All you can do, is to get personal—and that's dangerous. You know that."

Yes, Dudley did know that—all too well, because a year previous he had had the pleasure of paying a large judgment for libel. It was expensive knowledge, and he didn't want to buy any more.

"Well, I'm not going to libel this—this bishop, or anyone else, but I'm going to lambast him with ridicule, until he's sick. Now, you beat it, and round up the councilmen. We want to be cocksure of where we stand. See all of them, and impress upon their minds the necessity of not being carried away by this popular clamor. Get me?"

"Sure, I get you, Jim," replied Kearney. "I reckon when it comes to impressing them, I am the original little impresser, eh?"

"Oh, you know your business, Kearney."

"Sure, and I know yours, too, Jim. Don't forget that."

"Always joking, aren't you, Kearney," said Dudley, with the semblance of a grin. With all his gruffness, he liked his Irish-American right bower. Kearney would always stand hitched—of that he was sure.

"Sure, I was born grinning, and when I die, I'll give St. Peter the laugh," quietly said Kearney.

"All right, now get busy. As you go out, send in Miss Mason."

Miss Mason was Dudley's secretary.

"Can't," said Kearney.

"Why?" grunted Dudley, "sick?"

"Sick? No. But next to it—married."

"Holy mackerel, Kearney! How many secretaries have I lost in the past year through marriage?"

"Only three."

Dudley thought a moment, and then said—"Suppose we try to break that hoodoo, Kearney, get me a secretary from out of town. Girls here will be thinking *The Banner* is a matrimonial agency."

"All right, Jim," said Kearney, "but where will I get one?"

After a moment's thought, Dudley said: "Oh, send a wire to George Moss, of *The Chicago Mercury*. He must know of a lot of them, and he knows my nature and just what I want."

"All right, Jim. S'long," replied Kearney, and, after attending to the matter, he became a very busy man. One by one the councilmen were seen, and before nightfall he knew just where Dudley stood. The "old guard" he could depend on to the last ditch. While they were Dudley's men, Kearney issued all the orders, and they would follow him implicitly.

But, on the other hand, the opposition led by Bishop Anderson also became very busy. The seed sown at the mass meeting fell on fertile ground and bore fruit. Before nightfall of the succeeding day every councilman began to receive a deluge of notes, telephones, and messages from his constituents, and—as one of them put it —"It's three months before the session, which will act on this danged ordinance, and if this keeps up, we'll all be dead." And you may be sure Bishop Anderson intended it should be kept up to the very limit. He announced it at the next meeting, which was held a week following the first. There were to be a series of meetings held

once a week all over the city, so, as *The Scimitar* put it—"The people may know."

In announcing this mode of action, the bishop illustrated his point by saying: "My friends, down in the Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, there was a huge, rectangular block of granite, about six by four by four. It seemed as if some mighty hand had fashioned this stone, so even were its proportions. It was located in the middle of a vaulted chamber, over forty feet in height. From the dome of this room fell a drop of water. Another and another, every few seconds with the regularity of a clock. At first this drop of water made no impression, but, as each succeeding drop impinged itself upon the exact spot of its predecessor, the surface of the stone began to soften. This process kept up for hundreds, nay, perhaps, thousands of years, but, finally, one day just one drop too much fell, *and the stone was split asunder*. The application of this story to the present situation is just this: Keep everlastingly at it—pound—pound—pound, and the opposition will break. It cannot help it."

And they did keep at it, much to the discomfort of the councilmen.

That night Kearney said to Dudley:

"Jim, I've changed my mind; Bishop Ander-

son isn't like unto Mother O'Leary's cow. He's a drop of water."

Dudley didn't see the connection, so he grinned, and grunted—"Well, we can brush away a drop of water any day."

"Sure, we can, but another drop will come to take its place, that's what I'm afraid of."

"Well, I'm not afraid, if you are. How are the men lining up?"

"Just fair," said Kearney, for once looking serious. "Just fair, that's all. Beyond question, the bishop is making an impression—*a big one.* And some of the councilmen, who have heretofore been with us, have already flopped, bag and baggage, and others are preparing to do so. Still, I reckon I can hold the necessary twelve."

"Who's flopped?" retorted Dudley. "Why, Kearney, you know there are men in that council who can't flop. We can put the thumbscrews on them."

"That's a cinch, Dudley. But the thumbscrew chaps are not the floppers. It's the others. Caton, for instance, is a very uncertain quantity."

"Who? Caton!" exclaimed Dudley in astonishment, "Caton of the Sixth?"

"That's the man."

"Why, confound him, I'll——"

"Steady, Jim, no use getting hot and cursing Caton, because we haven't anything on him. Best thing to do is to get him out of town for awhile. He needs a vacation. If I can keep him away from the influence of Bishop Anderson and his crowd, I can handle him."

"Well, handle him. Get him out of town—keep him there. You've got funds for that purpose, if necessary."

"Dudley, all you rich men think of is money. It's your one weapon. Now, we've kept within the pale of the law in every fight, but it's been mighty hard to do, sometimes. We won't use any money. We're going to appoint Caton a special correspondent of *The Banner,* and send him over to—let's see," Kearney stopped and thought a moment—"to Yuma, Arizona, to write up society news."

"Yuma!" yelled Dudley, as if doubting Kearney's sanity. "We don't want news from Yuma."

"I know that," laughed Kearney. "I just want to bury Caton for the time being. I reckon we'll have to pay him pretty well for his work."

"How much?" asked Dudley.

"Oh, about one hundred and fifty bones a week, and expenses," said Kearney, lighting a cigar.

Dudley looked at his man for a moment, and said: "Kearney, you're a wonder."

Kearney did not reply, but thought to himself: "Maybe I am a wonder, but wonders sometimes change and become ordinary men."

Caton made some protest when the proposition was first put up to him. But Caton was amenable to money and when Kearney mentioned one hundred and fifty dollars per week and expenses, he capitulated. Caton's sense of duty towards his constituents was measured by what he could get out of them. Therefore, he accepted without delay, and that night Councilman from the Sixth Ward left for his new post—Yuma, Arizona.

CHAPTER X

THE BISHOP ATTENDS A BALL GAME

Bishop Anderson was, indeed, a very busy man these days. In the first place, the diocese must needs have his attention; the work on the new cathedral was progressing in good shape, and already could be seen the outlines of what some day was to be a magnificent church. He visited all of his parishes regularly; boosted weak churches, and praised the strong ones, and gradually the diocese of Presidio began to be a business institution, as well as a church. But outside of all this, the bishop found time to lead the political fight against Dudley. The weather became warm, but the good work went on. There must be no let up until victory was assured.

It must not be supposed that *all* the people in Presidio were in favor of the bishop leading this fight. On the contrary, there were many—yea, even in his own church—who opposed him, be-

cause they thought it was beneath his dignity as a priest—beneath him in every way as a man—to engage in what they were pleased to term, "a political brawl." Some of them were very outspoken in their denunciation. They wrote letters to *The Banner,* and you may be sure this journal published them all. They were food for Dudley, especially when he really had so little of merit on his side of the fight. Even in church meetings was the matter discussed; but the bishop had announced he would lead the church, and he did. And it may be said in passing that no less a personage than the Rev. Spencer, the man who had presented Dr. Anderson's name to the Presidio convention, wrote a note to good old Bishop Turner, telling him in no uncertain words of the actions of his protégé, and wondering if, after all, that convention hadn't made a mistake.

Bishop Turner was not a little worried when he received Spencer's communication, and wrote Bishop Anderson, who smiled when he read this letter. The bishop's answer, however, must have carried conviction, because Bishop Turner, in replying to the Rev. Spencer, said: "I think you have a mistaken idea of Bishop Anderson's work in this fight he is leading. *Just keep cool and follow his lead,* and you won't go far wrong."

One warm June afternoon, the bishop was somewhat tired. He had had a long, hard day all around, and he felt the need of rest and recreation. His young son, aged thirteen, happened along about that time, and the bishop said:

"Bud, let's go to the ball game."

"Sure thing, Daddy." And they went.

For years Presidio had trailed in the baseball procession, but this year Charley Kern, a new manager, had gotten together a team of fighters, and the "Reds" were heading their league by a slender margin. Of course, having a winning team increased the attendance—it always does—and the town was baseball crazy. The bishop and Bud sat in the fifty-cent bleachers, and thoroughly enjoyed the game—the man as much so as the boy. It was a close game, and every point counted. The "lucky seventh" came along. "The Reds" were one run behind—two were out, and one on—one run was needed to tie the score, and two to win, when Carey came to the bat. It was one of those tense moments so often seen at ball games when ten thousand or twenty thousand ordinarily sensible human beings become frenzied, shrieking maniacs; and the crowd in Presidio this day was no exception to the rule.

When Carey approached the plate, swinging

two big bats, every eye was on him. Dropping one bat, he swung the other carelessly over his shoulder, and nonchalantly stood at the plate waiting. "One ball"—"one strike"—"foul!" "Two strikes"—"two balls," cried the umpire. "Hit 'er out, Carey!" "Land on it!" "Kill it, man!" shrieked the crowd, and, in the middle of the fifty-cent bleachers, Bishop Anderson was rooting as loudly as any of them. He and Bud joined in that mighty chorus of shouts. And Carey did "hit 'er out." He caught one of the opposing pitcher's shoots square on the trade mark, and away sailed the sphere, high over the heads of the infield. The three outfielders started like mad toward the soaring ball. The audience for one second held their breath—and then a mighty shout arose, because the ball gently dropped over the fence. A home run, and two fleet-footed runners crossed the home plate!

"Good work, Carey!" shrieked the crowd.

Bishop Anderson embraced his son with a bear-like hug, and shouted out, "Some hit, that! Eh, Bud?"

"Gee, Dad," gleefully replied the boy. "Carey knocked that ball a mile!"

That gave the "Reds" a lead of one run, and they held it safe, and won the game. After the

contest was over the bishop presented a rather sorry sight. His collar was wilted. Perspiration came through his shirt and his thin coat, and the sun had burned him red. But his mind was rested. He had seen a fine, clean contest, between manly men, and his side had won. So why shouldn't he be happy and contented? And he was. The bishop held quite a reception among the bleacherites. Every one knew him, and men like a man who can preach God on a Sunday and root for the home team on a Monday. It represented red American blood.

There was another interested man among the spectators at this game. "Big Chief" Dudley, who, with two of his personal cronies, occupied a box near first base—in front of, and to the left of where Bishop Anderson sat.

During that wonderful seventh inning, when Carey did his good work, one of the occupants of the chief's box observed:

"Dudley, just cast your eyes up in those fifty-cent bleachers—about the middle—and you'll see a sight good for your eyes."

"Where?" asked Dudley, turning.

"There," pointing. "See that clerical gentleman rooting like a fiend. Your friend, Bishop Anderson. Some rooter, eh?"

"Rooter, bosh," replied Dudley; "that's nothing but personal advertising. He's been doing that ever since he came here. But he won't last," and his lips curled in a sarcastic sneer.

The sight of the bishop, so thoroughly enjoying himself, was to Dudley the same as a red rag to an enraged bull. Now he positively hated him.

"I don't know," said his friend, "he sure has this crowd on the jump."

Dudley made no audible reply, but to himself he said: "Wait until I get through with that infernal bishop." He didn't stay for the finish, but left in disgust after the end of the inning.

One of his friends remarked, as he stamped out of the box: "That bishop certainly has Dudley's goat." He had.

CHAPTER XI

KEARNEY REPORTS TO HIS CHIEF

DUDLEY'S private office on the second floor of *The Banner* building was a very fine one. It overlooked Main Street, and was a good-sized, airy and comfortable room. A large fireplace was in the center of the wall, between two windows, and over the mantel was a life-sized oil painting of Dudley. The furniture was mahogany, the chairs comfortable, and the walls, wheresoever space permitted, were lined with books. There was an air of sumptuousness, of arrogance, yet of knowledge about the place, in keeping with the character of its occupant. On one side was a door leading to the telegraph office, and on the other, one leading to the reception room and the office of Dudley's private secretary.

At nine o'clock in the morning the day following the ball game, Kearney came into Dud-

ley's office, and found it untenanted, save for Dennis, the office boy, who was busily engaged arranging the files of newspapers on a rack in the corner. Kearney always was the first man in the morning. Dudley trusted him implicitly, and never a move did the "chief" make but what Kearney knew every detail. Like all rich men, Dudley possessed the idea that money can do anything; and many and many a time Kearney had saved Dudley some very unpleasant moments by his sage counsel, positive action, and sound advice. More than once had Dudley, bull-like, taken a run for the hurdle behind which stood the law, but each time he had been brought up short by Kearney.

Dudley's record, so far as actual violations of the law were concerned, save in libel suits,—and every aggressive paper has those—was clean, and it was all due to Kearney, who had a wholesome respect for justice aroused. Kearney would do anything to win a point in a game—that is, anything within the law. Sometimes he would strain a point so the applicable law would bend; but never did he break it.

In this franchise struggle Kearney knew that Dudley, left to himself, would do anything to win. He wouldn't even stop at bribery. But

Kearney would have none of that. Bishop Anderson was raising an awful row, the people were thoroughly aroused at last, and all the elements of right and justice were on the side of the American's contention. But Kearney knew the Council—he was its speaker—and he believed, nay, he knew *he* could control that. As the fight grew warmer, he watched his chief closely; he realized if one false move were made, the opposition would pounce upon it like a hawk. There were many people in Presidio who would have been more than glad to see Dudley standing at the bar of justice, pleading to a criminal indictment. Kearney liked the bishop immensely, but his nature had become so ingrained with Dudley's personality, due to long association with him, that he fought the bishop on general principles. It was a great fight—steel against steel—and Kearney enjoyed every minute of it.

The evening following the ball game there had been another rousing mass meeting, and once more Bishop Anderson and the other speakers had aroused the big audience to a perfect frenzy of enthusiasm. Many of the Council had been won over, and, now the American company had a fighting chance, if a few more recalcitrant mem-

bers of the Council could be made to see the light of reason.

Kearney was glancing over Dudley's personal mail—he always did that—when Dennis observed:

"Gee, Mr. Kearney, there's sure some doings around this office these days. I never did see the boss so worked up."

"Well, Sonny," replied Kearney, smiling, "if you had as much on your mind these days as the 'boss' has, you'd be worried, too. But, that's none of our business. You go out and get me the latest copies of *The Tribune* and *Scimitar*." Kearney wanted to know just what the opposition had to say of last night's meeting. He knew about what they *ought* to say, because he had been there. He attended all these meetings—it was part of his business.

"All right, sir," replied Dennis, going out.

Kearney knew Dudley probably would want to give some advice about to-day's editorial, so he called the editorial room, and told them to hold up all the editorial work until Mr. Dudley came.

Dennis returned in a few minutes with the desired papers, and said in boyish enthusiasm:

"Here they are, Mr. Kearney, and look at that

front page leader in *The Tribune*. Some hot shot there for Mr. Dudley."

Kearney did look, and grinned, as he observed, "Yep, Dennis, as you say, some hot shot there, all right!"

His thoughts were interrupted by a commotion in the outer office. No need to inquire the cause —Dudley had arrived. His grumbling voice, as he said, "Tell the chauffeur he needn't wait; I'll send for him when I want him," indicated his mood, as he burst into the room. Throwing his cap, gloves and auto coat to Dennis, he grunted:

"Good morning, Kearney," going to his desk and sitting down. Kearney stood to one side to allow him to pass.

"Morning, Chief," he replied. "Some fine day."

"Sure, what's the news?"

Kearney handed him the copies of *The Tribune* and *Scimitar* and observed: "Just glance at *The Tribune*—first page, double-column leader. There's enough news for one morning."

Dudley took the papers and merely looked at them. He threw them to one side in disgust, and said with a snarl:

"What do you think of that, Kearney? A bishop in politics. Do you know I don't believe

he is sincere in what he is doing. I believe he's only fighting because he doesn't like me."

"Bosh! Dudley, you're dreaming. That's not the reason; he not only believes he's right, he *knows* he is—and *so do you, and so do I.* But he surely has reason not to like you. What the dickens you wanted to mix up in a church fight for, I never could see. The paper and politics ought to keep you busy."

"They do, but I really wanted Lamb elected. He's a good chap and minds his own business. I promised it to him, and I generally keep my promises. That's enough."

With mock reverence Kearney raised his hands and said: "But you are not even a communicant of that church." Kearney was the only man who dared to take any liberties with Dudley.

"I know I'm not," said Dudley. "I don't belong to any church, but I've been the biggest contributor to St. James' and St. Margaret's parishes until this—this——" here his voice indicated scorn, "Anderson came along."

"You take your religion on the pay-for-what-you-get plan, don't you, Jim? Sort of *a-la-carte,* eh?"

Dudley paid not the slightest attention to Kearney's tone of fun.

"Look what he's done since he's been here—got a lot of long-haired men and short-haired women to put up the money; building a new church!—what was the matter with the old one? Then worships in the temple. What do you call that—huh?" Dudley banged his fat fist on the desk.

"I call it class," briefly said Kearney. "I don't reckon the Almighty takes cognizance of a building, Dudley."

"Class? Rot!" retorted Dudley, using the same expression he did at the ball game, "personal advertising. You ought to have been at the ball game yesterday, and seen this godly bishop standing up in the bleachers, yelling like a fiend to Carey to 'Hit 'er out—hit 'er out! Paste it, Carey!'" Dudley vividly illustrated just what the bishop did. Kearney enjoyed it hugely and grinned from ear to ear, as he said:

"Well, Carey 'hit 'er out,' all right. The Reds won."

"It made me so everlastingly disgusted, I didn't stay for the finish."

"Dudley, tell me, what's the objection to a bishop's rooting at a ball game? He's got red blood in his body, the same as you and I."

"Grandstand play, man—just grandstand, that's all. And this franchise fight—what does

he dabble in that for? Why doesn't he run his church instead of principally denouncing me?"

"Well, a bishop votes, why shouldn't he speak as he pleases?"

Dudley paced up and down his office—the attitude of Kearney was getting on his nerves. Turning suddenly, he confronted him and said:

"Look here, Kearney, you talk as if you liked him."

Kearney, taking his cigar out of his mouth, knocked off the ashes and quietly replied:

"I do. He's got good style, and he fights straight from the shoulder."

Dudley gazed a moment in speechless astonishment at his man, and then said: "Well, cut it out! I would have let him alone when he came here, if he had not mixed up with Flanagan and his gang. But now, he's in too deep, and I'm going to beat him and the whole Flanagan crowd."

Kearney seemed to be weighing his words as he replied: "I don't know, Chief. He's stirring up considerable fuss. The people are with him, and if it came to the popular vote right now, they'd give the American a new franchise quicker than scat! You know that."

"Ah! but that's where we've got 'em," replied Dudley with glee; "they won't have a chance to

do that. *You* and *your* Council will attend to the franchise in September. You'll give a fifty-year franchise to the new company, we'll get the American cheap, and there you are!" The "Big Chief" rubbed his hands together as if in anticipation of the joy he would experience when this luscious plum fell in his already overfull, strong box.

"Yep," answered Kearney, "there you are. You've got it all framed up, Dudley, but it looks kind of hard on Flanagan and his people. They developed their system in the early days, when Presidio wasn't much; spent a lot of their own money; borrowed more; and now, when the plant is paying a good return—biff! we step in and take it away from them. Pretty rotten sentiment I call it!"

"Sentiment! There's no sentiment in business. There wouldn't have been a ripple of trouble but for this bishop's butting in. Now—now—I'm going to——" Just what he was going to do seemed lost in utterance, because, turning to Kearney, he said: "See here, Pat, you're getting well paid for what you do."

Kearney winced slightly and said: "Sure, I am, Dudley, but somehow or other I like clean money."

"Nonsense, Kearney, money is money, no matter how you get it. It will buy anything."

"Nix, Jim, there's one thing it won't buy."

"And what's that?"

"Bishop Anderson."

Dudley had seated himself at his desk; a peculiar, grayish look spread over his face. For the first time since he came in his voice was quiet as he slowly said, "No, I don't suppose it will." Immediately, however, he became himself again. "But we are going to find a weakness in him some place."

"So you said, when you told me to get his record," replied Kearney. "Well, I got it, and here it is. Want to hear it?"

"Yes," cried Dudley, all eagerness; "I-do."

CHAPTER XII

THE BISHOP'S RECORD

TAKING a memorandum from his pocket, Kearney half read, and half talked from his notes:

"Fine family—boyhood spent in Iowa—graduate Naval Academy—resigned—married—settled in Des Moines—took priestly orders—was Archdeacon of Utah—afterwards had several big churches. First wife died fifteen years ago—remarried two years later. Writer of note—last parish, St. George's, Hillsburg, Pennsylvania. Came from there here, at reduction in salary. Served as chaplain, Eastern Volunteer Regiment during Spanish-American War. His record in Presidio you know. Not a flaw in it, Dudley. As clean as a hound's tooth," Kearney concluded, as if he was glad the bishop's record was so clean.

Dudley was nonplussed, as he heard this sketch of the man he wanted to crush.

"No, there isn't a thing there I can use.

Served in both Army and Navy, hey! I suppose that's where he gets his fighting qualities from."

"Well, Dudley," retorted Kearney, "I call the American Army and Navy two pretty good schools to develop a fighter. They have fighting down to an absolute science."

"You talk like the Fourth of July," sneered Dudley. He was disappointed.

"No," continued Kearney, "but an Irishman loves a fighter. That's why I like you. Wait —here's some more which may add to your gaiety." Kearney relighted his half-burnt cigar.

"Bishop Anderson has a brother, also a fighter, because he, too, served in both branches of the service. Eight months' enlisted man, Marine Corps of the Navy. Discharged by order, then enlisted in army. Served two years and four months as an enlisted man, finally working his way up to a commission. Is an expert telegrapher, and has a brilliant military record. Medal of honor man for bravery at Santiago in '98—resigned from army when father died—was married and wife divorced him two years before resignation from service. Don't know whether anything scandalous in divorce or not. Settled in Chicago, living there ever since doing confidential work for

banks and big corporations—sort of refined secret service. Not much on the surface, but might find something hidden the bishop wouldn't care to have known."

Dudley felt a gleam of hope as he heard of this brother's record. Maybe there was something that he could use. That divorce sounded promising.

"What's his name?" he asked.

"Captain John Edmond Anderson," replied Kearney, consulting his notes.

"Blast his title—his name is enough."

"Well, from what we know, I reckon he earned that title," said Kearney.

"Never mind about that—what I want you to do is to find out the brother's record, and that of any one else connected with the bishop. I don't care how you find it—just so you get it!"

"Yes, Jim, I anticipated you on that point as soon as I found out the bishop had a brother. I've already started the wires and some information is here now, and I expect more every mail."

"Good, Kearney, good! Keep at it, and something is bound to turn up. It must."

The interview so far as Dudley was concerned was at an end. But Kearney wasn't through. He had something on his mind, and must get it

off. The chief busied himself with some papers —apparently forgetting Kearney, but that made no difference to him. He sat down by Dudley's desk, and, lighting a fresh cigar, proceeded with what he had to say.

"Dudley, I've been with you for many years."

"Sure, I know that, Kearney, and a faithful friend you have been," replied Dudley, looking up. The expression on Kearney's face caused him to cease work entirely and lean back in his chair.

"I came here when you bought up the old *Banner,* and I've helped you make it a great paper. I've seen you wax rich in money and power, and, in every fight you've had, I've been trailing right along, helping." Dudley started to interrupt, but Kearney continued, raising one hand as if in protest:

"Oh, yes, I know all about pay—I'll admit that; and I've never given you a bum steer yet. Now I want to give you a tip." He leaned back over the desk and looked Dudley squarely in the eyes.

"I've got a great, big, fair-sized working hunch you are in wrong on this franchise fight. You might have put it over, probably could, if this bishop hadn't jumped in."

Quick as a flash Dudley came back at him:

"What are you doing, preaching me a sermon?"

Kearney smiled. The editor's outbursts never caused him a moment's worry.

"No, Jim, not preaching at all. *I said I was giving you a tip.* Let that sink in. Bishop Anderson has this old town on the jump. We thought the first meeting was a flash in the pan, but see how the interest keeps up. I've attended every one of them and I'll confess it beats me! The same crowd keeps with the bishop—Rabbi Wise, Dr. Arnold and Father Leahy were there, as usual, but the bishop was the big noise. Councilmen are getting a line on how you stand with the public. Even I am getting it. The people, generally, fail to understand my loyalty to you."

"You!" laughed Dudley—"well, it's not a new experience for you. You've been pounded before. So have I, many a time—but we've always come through on top."

"All true, Chief—all true. But it gets on my nerves to have men, yes, and women and children, too, in this old town whisper nasty things about me. And their whispers aren't so quiet but what they can be heard about a block away."

A peculiar feeling came over Dudley as this

man stood before him, and, in a quiet voice, delivered his little talk. Evidently, Kearney was weakening, according to Dudley's apprisement, and that would never do. The chief knew full well if the leader dropped the fight the council, as a body, would melt away from his scheme like mist before a summer's sun.

Dudley leaned over the desk, and placed a heavy hand on Kearney's arm; then, as kindly as his gruff nature would allow, he began to talk.

"Come, Pat," said he, with a slight huskiness in his voice. "You know what this fight means to me; you know my position is impregnable. You also know I've never been licked, and, by the great horn spoon, I'm not going to be now!" The solemnity of his utterance left no doubt but that he meant every word. Kearney eyed his chief carefully, wondering at his intensity. But the mood was on him to speak his mind freely, and he shot back at once:

"That's what John L. Sullivan said, but there's always a first time, you know. Sullivan realized it after he had been beaten to a pulp. By jiminy, I never could get it into my head why you went into this franchise fight. What do you want a gas company for? You've got all the money you need; *The Banner* gives you an income you

can't spend, and you haven't a chick or a child to leave it to."

Dudley looked in amazement at Kearney, who chewed his cigar nonchalantly, and, suddenly, continued with what he had to say:

"Dudley, this is the truth. Bishop Anderson is under your hide. It's your pride that's fighting —your heart isn't in it."

Big Chief Dudley sat for a moment as if thinking of what Kearney had said. There was a far-away look in his eyes. Unconsciously, his hand grasped a round glass paper weight, which he raised up until his eyes rested on the picture of a sweet girlish face looking into his own. All at once his shoulders drooped as if years had suddenly been added to his life. Kearney stood still and watched. Also he hoped. But the incident was all over in a second, and the man before him again became the fighting editor. Pushing the weight away from him, he straightened rigidly and went on in his usual harsh voice:

"Never mind what I'm fighting for—or with. The simple fact is that I am fighting—and you'll fight with me. That's all there is to it!"

Kearney raised his hands in despair. "All right," said he, "all right, Jim, I get you." He had tried his best to set Dudley right and had

failed. There was nothing else for him to do but fight along with the Big Chief. At this moment, Dennis, the office boy, came in, and, bowing to Dudley, announced: "A lady to see you, sir," and placed an engraved card before him.

Big Chief Dudley was not sorry that the interruption came. Kearney was in a mood he didn't like, and he wanted the interview terminated. Looking at the card, he read: "Miss Mary Sherman."

"All right, Dennis, show the lady in. And, Kearney, you go out in the editorial room and see how things are and come back and let me know."

Kearney moved toward the door, just in time to meet Dennis, showing in Dudley's new caller. He looked at her in amazement, and muttered to himself—"Peach!" Meanwhile, Dennis pointed toward the massive man seated at a desk and said: "That's Mr. Dudley, Miss."

A moment later she stood before the great editor, and blushed rosily, as he peered deeply into her eyes.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ARRIVAL OF MARY SHERMAN

To describe Mary Sherman, one needs must have the pen of a poet, or the brush of an artist—tall, slender, dark hair and flashing black eyes—eyes which looked like deep pools, through which shone her very soul. Her lashes were long and sweeping. Her face oval—mouth rather large, showing, when she smiled, two rows of straight white teeth. Her lips were red and her cheeks glowed with health—not *rouge*. Her costume consisted of a plain but soft and pretty shirt waist, and a dark, tailor-made skirt, from under the hem of which peeped two slender feet. On her queenly head was a fetching Panama hat, and, as she stood before the editor, she made a beautiful picture.

As gruff as he was, Dudley could not help but admire his visitor. He paused, pencil poised, and said:

"You wish to see me, Miss?"

"Yes, I do. I have a letter for you, sir, from Mr. Moss, of Chicago," at the same time handing him the note. Mary Sherman's voice was as beautiful as her face and figure—a pure, rich, natural contralto. Her smile was dazzling, and, as Dudley took the proffered letter, he said: "Oh, yes, from George Moss, eh!" Breaking the seal, he read aloud: "This will introduce to you Miss Mary Sherman. You said you wanted a secretary, and she is as good as they make them—etc. —etc." Looking up at Mary Sherman the editor's stare became almost insolent. Said he, "So you want to be my private secretary, eh? Sit down." His gruff voice and shortness of manner were rather disconcerting, although Mr. Moss had warned her that Dudley was an "old bear," but a good man to work for. She simply smiled, sat down, and replied:

"Thank you, yes, sir; Mr. Moss was kind enough to write that letter and send me out here."

"Yes, I know," broke in Dudley, "I asked Moss to send me a new secretary when my last one got married. That's the trouble with you women—especially pretty ones. You work for a man until you become useful, well-nigh indispensable, and then, pst! Some twenty-dollar-a-

week chap comes along, and off you go. You don't know when you are well off." Dudley was attempting to be humorous, but his attempt was rather a grim failure.

Mary just smiled and said: "But you won't be troubled with me that way, Mr. Dudley."

"That's what they all say, but it has been my observation, Miss Sherman, that a pretty woman who isn't engaged or married, has been disappointed in love, or——" and here he looked at the girl very narrowly—"or she has had an experience."

Mary Sherman's eyes never wavered for an instant as she gazed back at her new employer. Perhaps there was just a faint suspicion of heightening color, as she smiled, and said:

"Do you think so, Mr. Dudley?"

"I *know* so, and sooner or later it comes out. But, that's neither here nor there. George Moss says you're a competent secretary, and I'll take his word for it. You must thoroughly understand one thing, Miss Sherman, my secretary must be all eyes and ears, and have no mouth. She must see everything, hear everything, and say nothing. There will be lots going on around this office you will see and hear. But you *know* nothing, save so far as *I want you to know.*"

"I understand you, Mr. Dudley."

"I am brusque and blunt," continued the editor, "and always have a fight on my hands. I've got one now."

"Don't you do anything else but fight, Mr. Dudley? Haven't you any time for pleasure?"

Dudley hadn't fully recovered from his interview with Kearney and here was this slip of a girl continuing along the same lines. He would show her right off the reel what manner of a man he was. So he roared out:

"Pleasure! Young lady, what greater pleasure could I have than winning a fight? Why, my philosophy of life is—fight somebody! fight him in front if I can; in the flank, if necessary; smash him in the rear if I must—just so I smash him!—always, of course, if he needs smashing. Most of 'em do!"

There were not many signs of human sympathy about this man as he faced the young woman and continued:

"That's the spirit around this office—*fight.* Every one is a fighter, from the office boy up—and you'll be one of us."

"I'll try, Mr. Dudley. Women *do* make good fighters—*sometimes.*"

"You are right, Miss Sherman. Once let a

woman become aroused to a point where she realizes she has to fight for what she considers her rights—then Heaven help the man! She can lick a dozen of them."

A peal of silvery laughter greeted this sally of Dudley's, and it sounded good to him.

"But in your fighting, Mr. Dudley, do you ever consider the men you smash? What of them?"

"That's their look out—not mine," grimly replied the chief. "Now, do you understand my nature? Your hours will be from nine until five, and sometimes in the evening. My evening work I do here and at my house. When you work at my home my housekeeper will care for you for the night. If we work here, I'll send you to your home in my car. Your pay will be a hundred a month, and time and a half for extra work. Satisfactory?"

"Perfectly, thank you, and I'll do my best."

"All right. When did you get here?"

"Last evening at nine o'clock."

"Find a place to stay yet?"

"Oh, yes. Mr. Moss wrote to a friend of his—Mrs. Fenton by name. She met me at the train, and has very kindly given me a room."

"Fenton?" said Dudley, musing, "Mrs. Fenton—where does she live?"

"At the corner of Twenty-ninth and Windgrove Avenue, I believe. It's just opposite a very pretty park."

Dudley started. His eyes glittered, as he leaned forward, and said: "Twenty-ninth and Windgrove Avenue—that's strange. There's a new church going up out there—isn't there?"

"Yes, I believe there is on the north side, facing the park."

Dudley arose from his chair, took three or four steps, and then, turning to the astonished girl, said:

"That's it—St. Clement's Cathedral."

"Oh, an Episcopalian church. I'm glad of that—it will be convenient for me to attend."

The editor looked at her very intently, and said:

"Are you an Episcopalian?"

"Yes, I am, why? Any objection, Mr. Dudley?"

The chief paused a moment before replying, and then, looking at the woman, said: "No, only this—the Episcopalian bishop, Dr. Anderson, is the man I am fighting now. *He's building that cathedral.*"

Mary Sherman started slightly.

"Fighting a church! Why, Mr. Dudley!"

He interrupted: "No, not fighting a church—just the man, Anderson. He's opposing me in matters that don't concern him."

This was interesting to the girl, who was, indeed, learning many things during her first day in Presidio.

"And the bishop," she asked; "is he fighting back?"

Dudley took three steps towards his desk, picked up the copy of that morning's *Tribune*, and, gritting his teeth, said:

"Is he fighting back? *I should say he is!* That is about all he is doing these days." He threw the paper from him in disgust.

Miss Sherman watched him coolly.

"But the bishop *is* building a church as well. You just told me that."

Sitting down to his desk, Dudley replied impatiently: "Yes, he is. But see here, young lady, this isn't a conversatione. It's time we get to work." Touching a button, which called Dennis, he continued: "Dennis, show Miss Sherman her office. And when you get ready, Miss Sherman, come back here—and always bring your notebook with you."

"Yes, sir," was the quick answer of the secretary, as she followed Dennis out.

To herself she said: "I think I am going to like this place. With all his gruffness, I believe Mr. Dudley has a heart."

As she and Dennis left the editor's office, she met Kearney coming in, and once more the Irishman failed to conceal his admiration for the pretty woman. Advancing to Dudley's desk, Kearney waited until the editor had finished signing some papers, and then said:

"Dudley, I just got a letter from Hensen, our New York man, about Bishop Anderson's brother, and I believe we are on a warm trail. It appears this Captain Anderson is mixed up with a Miss Phyllis Carew—'Miss' on suspicion, because she is a grass widow; has a past—a pippin at that. Anderson wants to marry her, but the girl disappeared three months ago."

Dudley's eyes gleamed, as he heard this report. It was the first encouraging thing he had heard in weeks. He fairly shouted:

"Good, now we are getting somewhere. Here's where I break Bishop Anderson's soul on the rack of public ridicule."

"Steady, Dudley," said Kearney, raising a warning hand; "not so loud. I hear you."

"Well, I want you to hear me," said the editor.

"I can," answered Kearney, "so can every one

else in the building." Dennis, coming in just then, *had* heard, but he merely handed Dudley a card, with his stereotyped "Gentleman to see you, sir," and was ready to get out as soon as he said it.

Dudley took the card, looked at it, appeared dazed, tore it up, threw the bits in the waste-basket, and shrieked with anger:

"Well, I'll be hanged! Tell him I won't see him."

Kearney wondered, as he moved towards his chief, while the thoroughly affrighted Dennis whispered, "Yes, sir," and started to leave.

"Oh, yes, you will see me, Mr. Dudley," said another voice, "because I am here now," and there, standing in the doorway, was Bishop Anderson, and his voice was pitched in the same tone he would use at a ladies' reception. A decided contrast to the snarl of Dudley. His six feet two of sturdy manhood seemed to fill the doorway, as he stood there for a moment before entering the room.

"Kearney, throw him out!" shrieked the enraged editor. All semblance of reason had fled. Dennis slipped out, determined not to stick around too close. However, he scented trouble, and, boy-like, he wanted to be near.

The bishop slowly approached the irate editor with the measured steps he might have used in following his choir boys as they sang the processional in church.

"No, Mr. Kearney won't throw me out," looking towards that gentleman and smiling, "for two good reasons. First, because from his name I take it he's Irish and believes in fair play—and, secondly, I don't believe he could." Evidently, Kearney agreed with him, as he made no effort.

Just then Mary Sherman re-entered the room, notebook in hand. She saw the tenseness of the situation, but going up to the editor's desk, said very quietly: "You wished me to return, Mr. Dudley."

He looked at her a moment and said: "Well, I don't want you now." Then a thought seemed to strike him. It would be a good chance to show this bishop a thing or two. When his secretary started to go out, he yelled at her:

"Wait! I do want you. Sit down." The girl obeyed.

Dudley turned to Kearney. "Hand me that letter you received a while ago." Kearney complied, wondering. Then he heard his chief say: "Write: To Hensen, care of our New York office

—Find out all about the Carew woman." For some unaccountable reason Mary Sherman's pencil point broke. Quickly taking another one she wrote as dictated—"especially about the scandal concerning her," continued Dudley. "Locate husband and other man, also find her, use every effort. Quick work. Important results pending on this information." Glaring at the bishop, he shouted: "Now, then, put that on the wire immediately. There's the telegraph office to the right."

Mary Sherman took up the notebook, and started to obey. At the door of the telegraph room she turned and asked: "What was the woman's name, Mr. Dudley?"

"C-A-R-E-W!" he cried. "Carew! Hensen will understand."

"Yes, sir," replied the girl, closing the door with a bang.

CHAPTER XIV

MEETING OF THE TITANS

THE situation in the editor's private office was tense in the extreme. Here were two strong men fighting on opposite sides of a great, public question—and each the leader of his respective faction. The only difference was that the bishop fought in the open so that all might hear and know, while the editor fought from behind his barricade of might, money and unscrupulous power—moving his men as might an expert chessman. Dudley was versed in every known political trick and would not hesitate to use any of them that suited his purpose. The bishop knew nothing of politics or chicanery, but possessed a sublime faith in the righteousness of his cause. Likewise, he was entirely confident of ultimate success. The editor was strengthened through having as his lieutenant the faithful Kearney—

a man who knew his every whim and could anticipate his every thought with seeming fidelity. Here was a man whose worldly education had been directly under Dudley and men of his type. Started aright, Kearney might have become a diplomat of high order, but now he had become so thoroughly steeped in Dudley's way of thinking that he moved his men as ordered and did as he was told. Deep down in his heart, however, there was an innate sense of fair play, which made him greatly admire the fighting bishop. Nevertheless, he muttered to himself: "He's got some nerve to come in here and face old Dudley in his own den. He's the first man who ever dared to try it—let alone do it." He started to leave the room, when the bishop spoke:

"Just a moment, Mr. Kearney—I should be more than glad to have you remain."

Kearney looked at Dudley, who was white and so beside himself with anger that he did not see his companion in the deal. Then the Irishman decided to remain—"to see the fun," as he thought. He listened intently while with all the scorn in his gross make-up, the editor snarled:

"Now, Bishop Anderson, you say Kearney can't—or *won't*—throw you out. Well, *I'll get some one who will!*" With that he leaped to his

feet and reached for a push-button. Bishop Anderson, alert, anticipated this action, and instantly grasped the irate editor's wrist in his strong right hand.

"Wait!" commanded the bishop, eyes glistening like steel beads. "You seem to forget, Mr. Dudley, the amenities of polite society. Now, I *am* a gentleman, and I assume you claim to be a gentleman. So I ask you in all kindness, as a gentleman, to sit down!" There was no mistaking the bishop's tone. He meant his words. Dudley knew this and it seemed the better part of valor to obey. Not that he was lacking in physical courage, but for the reason that he had good sense enough to know that a personal altercation with the bishop could not but turn out to his own disadvantage. He realized that the bishop surely would prove to be his master. Therefore it was with as good grace as possible he dropped in his chair and waited, while his self-appointed guest wiped his hands with his handkerchief as if to destroy his contact with his host's fleshy wrist. Turning toward the amazed Kearney, he said:

"You, too, be seated, Mr. Kearney, because I feel we—just the three of us—are going to have a real pleasant little visit."

"Murderation!" mentally exclaimed Kearney,

as he seated himself by the mantel, "Daniel in the lion's den!"

As the bishop sat down, Dudley snapped out: "Well, what do you want?"

There was a faint suspicion of a smile around the corners of the bishop's mobile mouth, as he replied:

"Just a moment, Mr. Dudley. In times of great stress men like something to sooth their nerves. Some drink—but I smoke." And suiting the action to his words, he reached in his pocket and brought forth a gun-metal cigarette case. Extracting one, he proffered the case to Dudley, who disdainfully refused.

"You, Mr. Kearney?" he asked of the big chief's first lieutenant, and was again declined. A bishop smoking a cigarette! What next? thought Kearney. However, said he quite affably:

"Thank you, no, Bishop. I never indulge in cigarettes."

"It isn't a habit I encourage or recommend—but once in a while I do use them," said the bishop as he prepared to strike a match. Just then the door of the telegraph room opened and Mary Sherman appeared.

"Excuse me, please," said she. "Did you ring, Mr. Dudley?"

"I did not," replied the editor gruffly, rubbing his wrist and eying it for a possible swelling.

The bishop made note of the beauty of the young woman and wondered in sympathy how she could work for a man of Dudley's stripe. As she passed out the bishop finished lighting his cigarette, and turning to the glum-looking editor, said:

"Now, Mr. Dudley, I am going to talk in language you can understand. Let's get down to cases." Dudley started as if to interrupt, but the bishop continued: "Ah, don't start again—please. I know 'getting down to cases' is a gambler's expression. I learned that in the West. We are all gamblers; you, Mr. Kearney—I, all of us. Startling thing to say, isn't it, Mr. Dudley, that I—a bishop of the living church—am a gambler?" Pausing for a brief moment to exhale a cloud of blue smoke, he further remarked: "Yes, *you* gamble with politics and public opinion—*for power*. You gamble with the law just as other men gamble for money. Sometimes you win—sometimes you lose, but you are always at a disadvantage, because your opponent keeps his cards concealed, and you never

know just what he has up his sleeve. When your hand is poor and your opponent timid, you bluff. About right—am I not, Mr. Dudley?"

Dudley was thinking hard while the bishop was speaking. He was a clever fighter and believed that sooner or later the bishop would uncover his plan and exhibit a weak spot. Then he would strike—until then he would spar for time, so he simply blurted out:

"Well, you seem to be a confessed gambler, you should know. But what of it?"

"Bear with me a moment, please," replied the bishop, in calm, even tones. "When I gamble I am pitted against sin and corruption—private and public. Two insidious snakes in the grass, always striving to debase the manhood and womanhood of our cities. I find lots of it right here in Presidio. But the stakes, Mr. Dudley, when I gamble"—the bishop was leaning towards the editor, gazing straight into his eyes—"the stakes are human lives—human hearts—human souls!—and I always win. Always because I hold two trump cards, Almighty God and *my trusty right*. My opponents have as their trump the devil and his cohorts—and God is to the devil what a royal flush is to a pair of deuces."

No opening yet for the editor, so he contented

himself by simply growling: "You seem devilish familiar with poker terms. What has that to do with forcing your way into my office, where you remain, unwelcome?"

Again the faint smile came upon the bishop's lips as he drew his chair closer until his arm rested on the editor's desk.

"Yes—I am familiar with gambling," said he. "As I observed before, I've seen plenty of it in the mining camps, and I am thoroughly familiar with men. *All kinds and conditions of them*—even your kind, Mr. Dudley. You're quite a common product in our big cities."

This shot of the bishop's landed true, and the editor felt its sting. He jumped to his feet in a fury.

"Now, see here, Anderson——"

"Steady, Mr. Dudley," interrupted the bishop. " 'Doctor' or 'Bishop' Anderson to you. I never allow my inferiors to become familiar."

"Wow!" thought Kearney, who was enjoying every moment of this duel of wits, "that's a home-run for the bishop!"

Dudley well-nigh lost control of himself and fairly shouted: "Well, I'll be damned——" and then he sat down again.

Again the cool and collected bishop interrupted:

"I am glad you realize that, Mr. Dudley, because *damned* you will be *eternally* if you don't change your ways. Now let's cut out all this banter. Of course I knew all about your opposition to my election and consecration as bishop of the diocese. But that never did worry me a bit. On the contrary, I admire a good, healthy, hard-working, *honest* enemy, because he keeps me constantly keyed up to a high pitch of endeavor to do that which is right. But I do not admire your methods. They were not honest ones."

"You mean to say I lied?" asked Dudley, leaning forward, eyes a-glitter.

"Well," answered the churchman, speaking very distinctly, "put it that way if you wish. After my election you wrote, or caused to be written, letters not only to Bishop Turner, but to every other bishop, stating that the sentiment was all for Dr. Lamb. It wasn't. I know Dr. Lamb, and he is a good, easy-going sort, in a way; but he's about as fit to build up this diocese as you are to—to—well, lead in prayer, which is not saying very much in his behalf at the present time. You've done him a great harm, a grave injustice by your ill-advised action."

Pausing a moment to let his words sink in, "Now, when I came to Presidio I determined to call upon you and see if I could not enlist your mighty aid on the side of right. I wanted to be friends with you, not only because of your brilliant ability and power, but because of the great good you could do for the betterment of Presidio. Oh, yes, I knew of your substantial contributions to St. James' and St. Margaret's, and I also know, since my election, you have withdrawn them as a penalty for their rectors having voted for me."

"Well, that's my business," interjected Dudley, as Kearney wondered how long it would be before the editor put in a blow. Just now the tide was all in favor of the bishop.

"Certainly," retorted Dr. Anderson, "that's between you and your conscience, if you have one. But the church will live and grow in spite of you, or any other man. In my first sermon I stated I would wear no man's collar! Yes, and *I meant you.* I wanted my position to be so plain every one would know just where I stood. Since coming here I've been a very busy man—with the new cathedral and—*other work.* So I didn't call upon you until now. But yesterday afternoon, I was at the ball game. You were there, too, Mr.

Dudley. I saw you. Wasn't it a corker—didn't Carey land on that ball?"

"Cut out the ball talk," shot back the chief. "I've got a sporting editor."

"And a good one, too. I enjoy reading his stuff. But you can't cut out baseball. It's too big a game, and I like it—so do you—so does every other American if he likes clean sport. Well, that game made me feel pretty good, and I determined to make my long deferred call. Something prevented it yesterday evening and last night I had a meeting—I surmise that you know that. Now I realize just how you feel towards me—your paper shows that, but isn't there some middle ground upon which we can meet? Can't we get together? Come, Mr. Dudley." The bishop arose, and held out his hand. Many moments elapsed before another word was uttered in the editor's sanctum.

CHAPTER XV

A PLEA THAT FAILED

"Big Chief" Dudley gazed at the extended hand of the giant churchman standing in front of him. Suddenly a feeling of joy crept into his heart. This bishop was suing for peace! Why hadn't he thought of it before! Of course, Bishop Anderson had raised a goodly sum to start the rebuilding of St. Clement's, but he was going to need more money, and, of course, he must know his (Dudley's) wealth. Most likely he went into this franchise fight just to stir up a big noise; to show him he could do things; then he would come along some time and fix matters up—withdraw from the fight, which would lag without a leader. And then—after it was all over—Bishop Anderson would strike him for a big contribution——

"Fine, fine!" thought he; "and I'll be liberal—it's a very cleverly thought out scheme. What a politician the bishop would have made!"

All this, thought Dudley, as he gently rubbed his hands. Inwardly he cursed himself for not seeing through the scheme before. Well, he *would* be friends with the bishop, but like the angler with the fish, he'd play with him, before getting out his landing net—which, in this case, was a check book. But the surrender must be complete before anything else would be done. It wouldn't do to allow the bishop to get off too easily. He must be taught his place and stay there.

In Dudley's mind the bishop's game was a hold-up, pure and simple. All his life he had been dealing with "artistic" hold-up men, but this bishop was the king of them all. In his case Dudley was perfectly willing to be held up, because the granting of a fifty-year franchise to his new company would mean the addition of more millions to his already swollen fortune. He not only would give a big sum toward completing St. Clement's, but he'd later give it a substantial endowment as well. He'd tie the bishop to the tail of his chariot with strands of gold—no man would try to break that kind of a halter. After holding out his hand for an awkward period, the bishop's face became stern and set. Perhaps he was gifted with sec-

ond sight and divined what was going on in the editor's mind. Kearney did, but it wasn't divination on his part. It was a mental cinch. He had seen Dudley at work before and knew his every move. But he didn't share the chief's opinion of the bishop. That gentleman didn't have the right look for the artistic grafter Dudley took him to be; therefore, he waited—watching every move.

"Bishop Anderson," said Dudley at last, leaning over the desk, "there is one way we can be friends, and only one."

"And that is?" quietly asked the bishop.

"Drop this franchise fight. You are a churchman," Dudley's voice was almost soft, as he gave utterance to his thought. He was angling—hoping that the fish would bite.

But the fish didn't bite. On the contrary, the bishop resumed his seat, and, leaning back, crossed one leg over the other. He smiled, and his smile was not particularly pleasant.

"That's funny. That's what *I* was about to propose to *you*—to drop the franchise fight—because you're in *dead wrong.*" Uncrossing his legs, he continued: "It's true, I am a churchman—but none the less—a man. You ask what is impossible, for two reasons: first—because I know

I'm right; and second—because I would be false to my duty both as preacher and citizen, did I not keep up this fight. It's you who are wrong, Mr. Dudley. You are fighting for personal aggrandizement, and you don't need it. I am fighting to conserve the interests of the community as a whole—for the savings of widows and orphans. You know that thousands of people in this city have invested their money in American stock; they did this because they believed in the future of Presidio—and their faith has been justified. But now the franchise is about to run out and a failure to renew it will cause the American to lose its most valuable asset, and these stockholders will lose everything. You bondholders—yes, I know you have over a million in them—men of your calibre, only buy securities with the minimum of risk—will take the property and turn it over to the new company—*your* company, Mr. Dudley—oh, yes, I know you are behind it all; *you* are the new company. Come, man, where is your spirit of fair play?"

Dudley was dumbfounded at this attack—it was absolutely unexpected. This bishop was sincere—didn't want money—wanted to fight! Well, he'd give it to him!

"It is not a question of fair play!" the editor

cried. "Every man must look out for himself. That's what I am doing."

The bishop's lips curved with a faint suspicion of scorn, as he rasped back:

"So that's your motto, is it? Every man for himself, and *the devil take the hindmost!*" Then, as his eyes glanced around the room, he continued: "I take it you are an admirer of fighting men, because here in your office I see fine statues of Hannibal, Cæsar—and here is Napoleon. Perhaps you fancy you are a reincarnation of them—and maybe you are! They were all fighters and good ones. They won many hard-fought victories. But, Mr. Dudley, Hannibal had his Scipio—Cæsar his Brutus, and Napoleon his Wellington and Blucher. However, in such cases, the defeat of these great fighting men was not caused by man, but by *Almighty God.*" Pointing a warning finger at the irate editor the bishop concluded: "And you, too, Mr. Dudley—you, too, will some day be defeated."

Seeing that his estimate of the man was wrong, the "Big Chief" sought at once a way to end this interview. They were not getting anywhere.

"Aw, cut out this Patrick Henry stuff. That doesn't go these days, and you're making a big mistake, Bishop Anderson, because I have you

pulverized already—you can't budge an inch without my permission. Get onto yourself."

The bishop was not in the least astounded by this bluff. His face was serious, and his voice remained calm, as he rejoined:

"Perhaps I am making mistakes—we all do, Mr. Dudley. The one Man who never made a mistake in this world was crucified. And, by the memory of that Man, I am going to fight you, and *I am going to win.* Now, if it is to be a continued fight, let's make it a fair one—if *you* can."

"Never mind how I fight, Bishop Anderson!" exclaimed Dudley, rising; *"I am going to fight you,—and I'll break you.* I'll——"

The bishop arose, and, with intense earnestness, said:

"Steady, Dudley! Just consider that when you fight me you fight a church—you fight an army of God's people, and neither you nor any other man can do that."

"God hasn't anything to do with this," said Dudley.

"Hasn't he? Considering you from your own estimate of yourself perhaps you'll concede your defeat to God later on."

"No, sir—it's you that I'm fighting," shouted

the editor, red with rage. "God has nothing to do with it. More likely it's the devil."

Right here the bishop came very near to losing his temper. He had done everything he could to make this man see the error of his position, and all efforts had been in vain. Now it was time to drop all pretenses and take up the gauge of battle in earnest. Moving a pace nearer to Dudley, so that he confronted him, the bishop slammed forth:

"All right, Mr. Dudley—*all right!* We'll drop the church and have it out man to man. Now, *you* listen to me: lately your paper has been getting personal regarding me and my family. Nothing wrong so far, but sneaking insinuations —such only as a virile pen, backed by a perverted mind, could concoct. *That stops now!* Do you hear me? Stops once and for all, or I'll settle with you personally, as a man would whose family and honor are his dearest possessions."

"What are you trying to do?" interrupted Dudley, eyes ablaze with anger—"intimidate me! I publish a newspaper and whatever is *news* I print, regardless of whom it may hit."

"No, I'm not intimidating you in the least. I'm just warning you—keep off the grass regarding my personal affairs. As to the public

questions, go ahead, use your money—use your power—use anything, and I'll fight you with your own weapons. I'll get your record, and woe betide you, if I find anything in it to your discredit—and I doubt not, I will. I came here for peace—not war; but you want war. Well, you are going to get it, and you are going to get it good and strong—*you poor, miserable Pharisee.*"

His effort was over. After gazing for a brief moment at Dudley he turned, picked up his hat, and started for the door. Kearney had moved to within a few feet of the editor's desk, and, as he passed him, the bishop put out his hand and smilingly said:

"I am glad to have met you again, Mr. Kearney, though I must confess I do not like the company you keep. I've seen you at service several Sundays. Come out next Sunday morning—at St. James'. I'm going to preach about the Pharisee."

"Sure, I'll be there, Bishop," replied the Irishman, heartily returning the handclasp. As the bishop approached the door, Mary Sherman came in with a paper in her hand. The bishop stopped in front of her, and said pleasantly:

"When you came in a few moments ago I noticed that very pretty little cross you are wear-

ing." Extending his hand, he continued: "Permit me, I am Bishop Anderson, and I am glad to know you."

"Thank you, Bishop," she replied simply; "I am Miss Sherman."

"I hope I shall have the pleasure of meeting you again."

The young woman looked the bishop squarely in the eyes, with a peculiar smile:

"You will, Bishop," and passed on.

The bishop gazed at the girl, as she passed him, and then left the office.

Dudley was still standing at his desk as if in a daze, when his secretary approached him. She laid a piece of pink paper before him, and said:

"This message just came from Mr. Hensen." Immediately she turned and left the room, stopping just outside the door.

The editor picked up the telegram in an absent-minded way. He was thinking of the lashing just given him by the bishop; and then, as he read, his big frame straightened up, his eyes glistened, and his teeth showed big and white through parted, thick lips. This was what he read:

"Am on trail of Carew woman. Went West —former husband and man here in New York—

can put hands on them any day. Captain Anderson in Chicago."

Now Dudley smiled—really grinned—with joy, because right at the moment he most needed ammunition this telegram came to hand.

"Good," he cried, handing the message to Kearney,—"good! Things beginning to come our way." Kearney read and nodded his head. Then he abruptly asked:

"Dudley, what's a Pharisee?"

"Well, from the way the bishop spoke it's what a Republican thinks of a backslider." Then, taking up the telephone, he jerked out: "Give me the editorial room quick. That you, Crowell? Don't mention Bishop Anderson personally in any further issues until I direct otherwise. I'm after some new dope."

That was all. The "new dope" would be the bishop's brother, and the Carew woman.

CHAPTER XVI

CAPTAIN JOHN ANDERSON

WHEN Bishop Anderson left *The Banner* building, he stood for a moment on the curb watching the busy scene before him. Main Street was full of activity. Clanging trolley cars passed and repassed. Honking, sputtering automobiles wormed their way in and out; loaded trucks crawled along, while the sidewalks were lined with hosts of hustling humanity, bent on getting somewhere, and as soon as possible.

"Truly a wonderful scene—all these people scurrying along," thought the bishop. What a tremendous power for good there must be in such a bustling multitude if only its energies could be guided in the right direction. The bishop believed such a thing could be accomplished, but the place to start seemed to be back there in the office he had just left. "It's worth the effort," he muttered to himself.

It was noon and being a member of the University Club, the bishop wended his way there for luncheon, and then home. He had tackled a hard problem calling for equally hard thinking. He knew from his interview with Dudley that henceforth it was to be war to the knife between them. Like the editor, he knew either one or the other must in time give way, and the bishop was not in the mood to acknowledge himself a quitter. Early Western experiences had taught him to hit hard when to hit was necessary, and now was the time. The city council must and should be made to turn down Dudley and his gang. It was to be a finish fight and no quarter asked or given on either side.

The bishop related to his wife all details of his interview with Dudley. It was his habit to confide in her, and what he had to say filled her heart with dismay. Her mind travelled back to Hillsburg, to the pretty, vine-covered rectory nestling beside a beautiful church. There all was peace and harmony, and she had had her husband much to herself. In Presidio it was work, work, work—and fight, fight, fight!

Helen Anderson, however, well knew that the way to help her husband was not to oppose him, lest she might weaken his purpose.

"Keep it up, Henry!" she encouraged. "I know you will win." And that she really believed, for she had absolute faith in the stamina of her stalwart preacher husband.

The bishop worked that afternoon on diocesan matters, and then went out to make some calls, saying he would return in time for dinner at seven. At six o'clock his wife was in the large living room, arranging some flowers and putting things in order for the evening, when she heard a step on the porch, and there, in the double doorway, stood Captain John Anderson, the bishop's brother, and beside him Mrs. Henriette Eleanore Anderson, mother of himself and the bishop. A broad smile overspread Jack's face, as he called out:

"Hello, Helen!"

"Bless my soul!" cried the bishop's wife, as she ran, with hands outstretched in greeting. She kissed Mother Anderson tenderly, and shook the captain's hand. "Where on earth did you come from?"

"From back home, of course," laughed the captain. "I had some business out this way, and as I hadn't seen the 'old Doc' since he became a bishop and neither had mother, I packed up my bag,

picked up mother, and here we are. Glad to see us?"

"Am I glad? Indeed, I am glad! And Henry,—'the old Doc,' as you call him,—will be so glad. You are well, I hope, Mother Anderson? Let me take your bonnet and wrap."

"Well! Don't I look it?" cried the little old lady joyously, as she handed her daughter the old-fashioned bonnet and shawl. Then, looking at Jack with fond eyes, she said: "I wish this boy would stop calling his brother 'Doc.' It's irreverent—he's a bishop, now."

"Sure, he's a bishop," replied Captain Jack, with a semblance of seriousness, "but he's still my brother. Do you know, every time I see him in his robes and hear him say, 'The Lord is in His holy temple,' I feel like laughing out loud, because I think if the good Lord knew as much about him as I do, well—he——"

"Jack Anderson!" exclaimed Helen, half chidingly. Then "Little Mother" came towards him and playfully said: "Now, sir, you stop that raillery this instant, or I'll be tempted to take you over my knee—just as I used to do."

"Nonsense, Mother," cried Jack merrily, "you're not big enough now."

"Oh, yes I am, dear,—if I tried."

Mother Anderson was small and well preserved for a woman of seventy-six. Her hair was silvery white and dressed in a becoming, wavy fashion. Her eyes were still bright, and she was much more active than many women years her junior. She was of the self-reliant type, independent in spirit, and now lived in contentment, proud, indeed, of her "two boys," as she termed the captain and the bishop.

The captain, her second son, stood five feet ten, and weighed the correct hundred and eighty pounds. He carried himself erect, presenting a decided military bearing. His hair was a reddish brown, sprinkled with a very few gray threads, and his eyes—green, gray or blue, depending upon his moods. Jack Anderson had never exactly been a stray sheep, but when he was a boy of twelve and had learned telegraphy, the "travel bug" got into his blood and he started out to see the world. Sometimes, when in funds, he saw it from a plate-glass Pullman window; and, again, when "broke," from the side door of a box car. Such capers had caused his parents many unpleasant hours, their ever-present fear being that "something was sure to happen—some day." One day they would hear of him as being in the far West—next week in New York. Once he

turned up in Panama as spike-carrier on the Isthmian Railroad. At twenty-two, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps—saw service on the Atlantic Coast, and was finally ordered to the Boston Navy Yard. When Mother Anderson heard her boy was in the Navy as a marine, she was sorely oppressed. But her husband, Major Anderson, being a veteran of the Civil War, was reconciled. "Don't you worry, my dear," said he; "Jack's in the right place at last. We'll know where he is for the next five years anyway, and that will be a consolation hitherto denied us."

But Jack did not stay in the navy five years—nor one year. Seven months after he enlisted, he became disgusted with that branch of the service, wrote to United States Senator John James Ingraham, who represented his home state, and asked for a discharge. The fact that Jack Anderson's father was Department Commander of the G. A. R., and the old soldiers' vote was a big element in his state, the discharge was easily forthcoming. The next legislature would either re-elect Senator Ingraham, or elect some one to succeed him, and in doing Major Anderson a favor he would be helping his own cause along. Thus figured the senator, but had he really known

the facts, Private Anderson would have stayed out his full five years in the navy. Be that as it may, the young man came home to a rejoicing mother, and a doubting father. Six months afterwards, he enlisted in the army at Fort Hays —a western Kansas post—and there he stuck. He had sown a goodly crop of wild oats and he was ready to quit. Coming of a long line of military ancestors the service appealed to him, and at once he became a good soldier. Two years and four months after the enlistment, he doffed the chevrons of a corporal and donned the straps of a second lieutenant, now becoming an officer and a gentleman. Then it was that the mother rejoiced and the father became proud; their boy had come into his own at last. Indeed, it would seem that pride in him was quite justified, when, in due course, their youngest boy was promoted to a captaincy.

By this time Jack Anderson should have acquired a reasonable amount of common sense, but alas! two months after he was commissioned, he eloped with Veronica White, a school girl sweetheart. There is no gainsaying the fact that Veronica was a sweet, beautiful girl, but the pair were totally unsuited to each other. There was a year of seeming happiness, one of

uneasiness, one of doubt, one of musing—and then came the inevitable divorce. Veronica got the decree on the ground of incompatibility—Jack not defending the case.

During Captain Anderson's early army career he developed an abnormal sense of deduction and investigation, and this led to his detail in the Bureau of Information—the secret service of the army. At thirty-two he was in charge of this important branch, and rendered splendid service. His work took him all over the world, and gave him a broad insight into men and affairs.

During the Spanish-American War, the captain became the President's confidential man with the army in the field. At Santiago he rendered most conspicuous service, for which he received the coveted Congressional Medal of Honor. At the close of that war he held an enviable position in the army and was one of its most distinguished young officers.

The trend of our lives is sometimes changed in a most sudden and startling manner. After the Spanish-American War, Jack Anderson had rejoined his regiment, which was fitting out for Philippine service, when he received a telegram from his clerical brother, saying their father, Ma-

jor Anderson, was seriously ill—"Come at once!" An hour later came another message telling of the major's death.

While Major Anderson had always earned a a handsome salary, he had spent every cent as he went along, so when they laid their gallant father away in beautiful Woody Glen Cemetery it was found there was nothing left to "Little Mother," save her two boys, and an invalid daughter. Expenses were heavy; debts had to be paid, and two helpless women—mother and daughter—must be cared for. The older brother had not at this time achieved fame and competence as an author—his clerical pay was none too big—and, besides, he had a large and growing family. So it came about that the burden fell upon the army son, and his pay would not meet it. The army being long on glory and work, but a trifle shy on compensation, Jack Anderson well knew that sooner or later he would have to resign the service, in order to make more money.

Three months after Major Anderson's death, the little invalid daughter joined him on the other side, and immediately afterward Captain Anderson resigned the service. It was a hard blow to the army man, because he had loved the service better than he did his life. He settled in Chicago;

became a confidential man for banks and big corporations and made a very handsome income. The little mother came to live with him, and he was a great comfort to her in her hour of great sorrow. Her son's first matrimonial experience had somewhat embittered him toward society, and he had never married again, though deep down in his heart he cherished the hope that some day he would meet *the* woman who would make him happy. Like all army men he was a fatalist—but that did not prevent him from keeping his eyes open to see that *one* woman when she appeared. His mother, as he said, was his pal, and that little lady more than once said to him:

"Jackie, boy, if I could see you happily married, I would be content to go on to your father and my other babies."

"I may marry again some day, Mother dear," said he, "but you and I are both young yet. Let's take our time."

CHAPTER XVII

BROTHERS PLAN NEW BATTLES

JACK was the first to see the bishop as he entered the comfortable living room, and, with mock solemnity, he bowed low and said:

"His reverence, the Bishop of Presidio."

"Why, bless my soul, Mother!" exclaimed the bishop in joyous tones. "And you, Jack! Where did you drop from—heaven?"

He tenderly kissed his mother, and shook hands with Jack, who replied:

"No, not heaven, Doc; but the next place to it —Chicago."

The little mother was beside herself with joy. She was with "her boys."

"What brought you here?" asked the bishop.

"Business—and the South West Limited," replied his brother.

"What business?"

"Oh, personal—and otherwise."

"Personal?"

"Sure," laughed Jack, "and the personal part you and I will talk over later. Then, you know, mother has never seen you as a bishop, and she thinks that as a preacher you have Henry Ward Beecher and Philip Brooks beaten a mile. Had an awful time persuading her to come, though, Doc. She was at my office two hours before train time, for fear we'd get left."

"What a torment you are, Jack," interjected Helen.

Mother Anderson spoke up and said: "I've tried to break him of it since I've been living with him, but it's a hopeless case. He was just as anxious to come as I was—more so, perhaps."

Jack looked happily at his blessed mother, and, thinking of her advancing years, for a half-moment his eyes were grave. Then they danced again as he said:

"Nonsense, Mother. Now, didn't you say you wanted to see your four hundred pounds of sons together? Didn't you? Well, here we are." And, standing beside his clerical brother, Jack struck an attitude, while Mother Anderson looked upon the two with beaming eyes.

"Well," said the bishop, looking down upon

his mother, and placing a hand upon his brother's shoulder, "we are going to keep you both for a long visit. Great place, Presidio. Diocese hasn't been much heretofore, but it's going to be. I raised one hundred and thirty thousand dollars for the church during my first ten days' stay here, and we're building a new cathedral. You saw it as you came in. As *you* would say, Jack, 'Some class to that work'—eh?"

"How much did you say, Doc?" exclaimed his brother, with astonishment—"A fortune, in ten days! Jiminy crickets! What a promoter you would have made! Give up the ministry and come with me and we'll make our fortune!"

The bishop's face became serious as he started to reply:

"I am a promoter, Jack. I promote——"

"Sure," interrupted that worthy, waving his hand, "I know all about that. But just save that sermon you are ready to fire at me for next Sunday. You must remember, Doc, I'm a Presbyterian. I am true to the faith of my fathers. You are the backslider in this family."

"Will nothing ever stop you, Jackie?" cried the mother.

"Sure, this will," replied the captain, as he kissed her cheek. He was simply bubbling over

with good nature. Just then the telephone rang. Helen moved as if to answer it, but the bishop said:

"I'll answer it, my dear," taking the receiver from the hook. "Hello! this is Bishop Anderson —who? Oh, Mr. Flanagan—a matter of importance you say? Certainly, I'll see you—gladly. When? Now—very well, in a few minutes. Come over."

"That's Bernard Flanagan, President of the American Gas Company," he continued, hanging up the receiver.

Jack laughed, as he said: "Probably wants you to preach a sermon to his employees. They generally need it—at least in Chicago."

"Well, he'll be here in a minute. Helen, dear, will you show mother and Jack their rooms? You needn't dress for dinner."

"Needn't dress, huh?" retorted Jack. "What do you think I've brought along my Tuxedo for, Doc? You bet I'll dress, and you, too, although all you clerics have to do to dress is to turn your collar around."

"All right, youngster," laughed the brother.

"Cut that 'youngster' business, Doc. I'm past forty, you know."

"Well, young man," broke in Mother Ander-

son, "your actions would indicate you were about fifteen. Now come with me!" and, seizing him by the right ear, she continued: "lead on, Helen."

Jack loosened his mother's hand, and, picking her up in his strong arms, said: "I'll follow you, Helen." The little mother put her arms around his neck and kissed his cheeks, while the bishop and his wife looked on with delight. As they went upstairs the bishop yelled after him:

"You're nothing but a forty-year-old boy! You'll never grow old."

Answering a ring at the door the bishop admitted Mr. Flanagan.

"I happened to be in the neighborhood, so I thought I'd run in and see you for a moment," said the president of the American Gas Company.

"And I am glad you did. Anything particular since I last saw you? Won't you smoke?"

"Thank you, Bishop, not now. I think the time is here when we can pretty nearly tell where we are going to stand in the present council. There are twenty-four councilmen, you know—two from each ward."

"Yes, I know that."

"Well, from all reports we have at hand we are sure of eleven, while Dudley has twelve sewed up

tighter than a drum. That leaves one—Caton—and Caton is a slippery one. He's on the fence. I think he's waiting."

"Waiting for what?"

"For one side or the other to come across."

"You mean money?"

"That's about it, Bishop."

Bishop Anderson arose, took a turn across the room and back, and then said:

"None of that, Mr. Flanagan. Not a hint of it. This is an appeal to their honor and sense of reason. I only consented to go into this fight with the understanding everything would be open and above board—and it's got to be! You know I've always told you I wasn't a politician."

"That's the saving grace of the whole situation, Bishop," replied Flanagan, "that you are not a politician. Because, if you were, Dudley could beat the heads off of all of us. He's used to fighting politicians, but you're a bishop and it's a new situation for him; he's completely flabbergasted."

"But this Caton, Mr. Flanagan, who and what is he?"

"Oh, he's a decent chap enough, but vacillating. He's one of the many men who go into politics for what there is in it."

"Honest?"

"Up to a certain point—yes. Beyond that—doubtful."

"Well, I'll see Mr. Caton, personally, and see what can be done. Maybe I can win him over. Anyway, I'll try."

"You'll have to hunt him up, Bishop, because I am informed he has gone away for the summer. But suppose we should win Caton—that will bring up a peculiar situation. Each side will have twelve votes—a tie."

"Well, I am not very well versed in parliamentary law, Mr. Flanagan, but I believe a tie is no vote—and, as the question will be on the granting of the franchise to the new company as against the American, the motion would be lost. The whole matter would then go over until after next election when the new council would pass upon it. And surely we can win that election. We have several months yet to work on that line, you know."

"That's very well put, Bishop, and, ordinarily, a tie vote would be no vote, but not in Presidio. You see when our city forefathers drew up our charter, in our council organization, they followed the lines laid down by the United States Senate, where in case of a tie the presiding officer has the deciding vote."

"Well, go on."

"In our council, in case of a tie, the speaker votes, and his vote decides it. The speaker is an elective office."

"And the speaker is?"

"Why, Patrick J. Kearney, Dudley's right-hand man."

"Yes, I remember—Kearney."

"And, Bishop, the very air Kearney breathes, the ground he walks on belongs to Dudley, who made him. Kearney would do as Dudley dictated until hell froze over—I beg your pardon, Bishop."

"That's all right, Mr. Flanagan," replied the bishop with a smile. "Hell is a very expressive word. I refer to it frequently myself in my sermons."

"But, don't you see, Bishop, Kearney's vote would be recorded for the ordinance, and then—good-bye American."

"Still, Kearney is a good Irish name, Mr. Flanagan; that ought to be easy for the Catholic influence."

"Catholic nothing, Bishop. Kearney's from the North of Ireland—Belfast. He's a Presbyterian, if anything, but a church wouldn't have

any more influence on Pat Kearney than water on a duck. Looks pretty bad."

"I'm not so sure of that, Mr. Flanagan. I've met Kearney once or twice, and I don't regard him as hopeless by any means."

"You've met Kearney?" said Flanagan, wonderingly; "where,—when?"

"Well, this morning, for instance, in *The Banner* office. And I met Dudley, too."

"What!" exclaimed the gas president; "well, I'll be——"

"Steady, Mr. Flanagan—no, you won't!" smiled the bishop, interrupting. "I made a social call upon my friends, the enemy—that's all."

"Called on Dudley, socially! You! Jehosaphat! And was it social, Bishop?"

"Just about as social as two cats with their tails tied together, and hanging over a clothes-line. But I had it out with Dudley, Kearney was there, and I am in a better position to fight now than ever. As I said, I think Kearney might be won."

"Did he say anything?"

"Who? Kearney? No, not much. Dudley and I did most of the talking. But it wasn't so much what Kearney said—rather what he didn't say. It's the man—he's Irish, and, as *you* know,

the Irish have hearts; this battle is of the heart—not the head." Flanagan was almost too amazed to speak, but he did reply:

"Well, what's coming off next! You called on Jim Dudley! It beats me!"

"But why shouldn't I call upon him, Mr. Flanagan? He's a public man, a great editor, and proprietor of a powerful paper. Do you know, I admire the man in many ways? He's a fighter, you can't get away from that."

"But an unscrupulous one, Bishop."

"True, that's because you citizens of Presidio always have allowed him to rule you with an iron rod. You are all afraid of him, and a man afraid is half licked before a blow is struck. I am not afraid of him, and I am going to fight on, and I'm going to beat him! And then win him over to my way of thinking."

"If you do, Bishop," said Flanagan incredulously, "I'm ready to believe the age of miracles has returned."

"No, not miracles, Mr. Flanagan. Just reason—that's all."

CHAPTER XVIII

AT THE BISHOP'S HOME

MOTHER ANDERSON, at this moment, came into the room, and both men instantly arose.

"Do I interrupt, Henry?"

"Not at all, Mother. I want you to meet my good friend, Mr. Flanagan."

"I am, indeed, glad to meet you, Mrs. Anderson. You are to be congratulated on being the mother of such a son."

Her heart glowed with pride, as she heard these words. She looked at the big bishop with loving eyes.

"I am glad to hear you say that, Mr. Flanagan. He is a good boy. But I have another son, my baby. I want you to know him," and, going to the stairway, Mother Anderson called:

"Jackie! Oh, Jackie boy!"

"Coming, Mother dear," answered the cap-

tain, coming down two steps at a time. He was immaculately dressed for dinner. "Well, what now?" he inquired.

The proud mother, taking him by the hand, said:

"Mr. Flanagan, this is my baby, Captain John Anderson." Then, glancing up at "her baby's" hair, and noticing it was most carefully parted and brushed, she cried: "There, your hair is too smooth. Stand still, sir!" and she proceeded to rumple it up—"I never like him with his hair plastered down that way—he doesn't look natural. It brings out his Irish ancestry to muss it up a little."

Mr. Flanagan enjoyed the little domestic scene, and laughingly said: "I am more than glad to meet you, Captain Anderson; and you, Madame, are doubly blessed with two such boys. A militant bishop and a captain!"

The bishop interjected, pointing to Jack. "This is mother's favorite, Mr. Flanagan—you can see that."

"Nonsense, Henry," said the little mother, "Jack is not my favorite—he's my baby. *You* are my man-child."

There was a world of pathos in her voice, and sweetness in her looks, as Mother Anderson

gazed fondly at "her boys." She *was* proud of them, and with good reason, too.

"Well, I see this is a family party," remarked Mr. Flanagan, "and I'll be going, Bishop. Of course, you'll be staying home this evening?"

"Yes," replied the bishop; "this is the first time we have been together in some time, and I guess I'll let things run to-night. We should be glad to have you dine with us."

"Thank you, no, Bishop; I won't intrude," and making his adieus Mr. Flanagan left.

The bishop stood before his mother, and said: "Well, well, Mother, how nice you look."

"You like my costume, Henry?"

"Like it? Certainly I do. You look like a girl of thirty."

"And *I am* a girl—of seventy-six."

Jack came forward and tenderly said: "Still, the best little girl in all the world, Mother dear. Why, Doc, up in Chicago mother is the belle of the ball."

"Yes, young man, and you are the bellows. Now stop this minute."

"All right," grinned the captain, seating himself at the piano, which he proceeded to play with one finger.

Mother Anderson sat in the bishop's big chair,

while he leaned against the desk, looking down upon her.

"Henry, do you like your work out here as well as in Hillsburg?"

"Better, in some ways, Mother. In Hillsburg I only had a parish—one church. Here I have a diocese—thirty churches—and Presidio is a coming city. My work has started well; the new cathedral is being rushed—will be finished in November. And each day I see this great church going up, I realize it is a monument to God. Why, Mother, the sound of the masons and carpenters at their work is music to me. It is the anthem of my soul, while the smell of burning lime is like incense to my nostrils. It's intensely inspiring. You know I made a sacrifice in coming here—three thousand less a year than at Hillsburg, so I haven't gained anything financially by making the change."

Jack stopped playing, turned, and laughingly broke in:

"That's the funny thing about the whole business, Doc. Generally when a preacher chap receives a call to a new field, the first question he asks is: 'What salary do I get?' His answer to the call will depend on the amount. If it is an increase he prayerfully considers the offer—and

then—accepts. But if it is less, he can't hear the call. I think you hold the record in that line."

"There you go again, Jackie!" chided the little mother, shaking her finger at him. "Have you no respect for the cloth?"

"Not when worn by my own brother. I know him. This preaching is one, great, big snap. Half-rates on railroads, ten per cent off in stores, no doctor's bills. Just get up once or twice on Sundays and preach to the faithful. I'll bet a nickel, Doc, you haven't prepared a new sermon since you came here. You just reach down in a barrel and pull out an old one. Pretty classy job, I call it!"

"Now, stop it, Jack——"

"Don't mind him, Mother. I don't," laughed the bishop.

"All the same what I say is true. You preachers are after the money, same as we all are."

"Well, in this case you can see I wasn't. I do believe you're mercenary, Jack."

"Nay, Doc, just practical—that's all."

CHAPTER XIX

AN ARGUMENT FOR LOVE

After the ladies had retired for the night, Jack Anderson took a turn or two up and down the porch, after which he came in and slowly advanced towards his brother, who sat with hands clasped behind his head, silently smoking. Both men were thinking deeply—each on subjects widely apart. Placing his hand on the bishop's shoulder, the captain finally broke the long silence.

"Pretty well fagged out, old man, aren't you?"

"Yes, but not too tired to talk to you, boy. What is it?"

Jack hesitated a moment.

"Pretty hard to start," said he hoarsely.

"The way to begin is to start. Have a fresh cigarette?"

"Thanks," said the captain, "I will." Plainly he was worried, but after he had dropped the

burnt match, he continued: "All right, Doc, *I will* start. *I am in love.*"

The bishop looked at his brother with a kindly smile, and said:

"What—again?"

"But this time it is very serious," and his face showed that the captain meant every word of it. The bishop divined the situation.

"Well, sit down and let's talk about it. Who is she?"

Jack sat down opposite his brother, speaking slowly, as if weighing every word:

"New York girl—Phyllis is her first name—never mind her last—yet. And I want to get married."

The younger man was having a hard time. The bishop realized that this "youngster" brother of his was past forty, and if he ever was going to have any sense, he would have it now.

"Well, why don't you?" queried the bishop. "If your mind is fully made up, and the girl is willing——"

"Want you to perform the ceremony."

"That certainly isn't an impossibility—I can, you know."

"Yes, but will you? That's the question."

"Question? Why, Jack?"

"There's an obstacle."

"What obstacle? That you were divorced? But your former wife has since died. So that removes any obstacle so far as you are concerned."

"I know that," replied the captain, leaning over the desk, "but the obstacle is on the other side."

"How?" asked the bishop, looking at his brother intently.

"She is a divorcee."

"She? Where? When?"

"New York—six years ago."

The bishop's voice showed his relief, as he said:

"Well, even that can't be so bad. In New York State divorce is granted for *only one cause,* and the innocent party is privileged to re-marry. Even my church recognizes that. Of course," he added, very slowly, *"she got the divorce?"*

Captain Anderson arose, and, walking to the open fireplace, dropped his cigarette in the grate and stood looking at its glowing end for a brief moment. Then, coming back with a drawn, white face, said:

"That's just it, old man! She didn't get the divorce. Her—husband got it. *The presumption is that she is the guilty party."*

"Presumption!" cried the bishop, astounded.

"Yes, you heard me say it," replied his brother, "presumption. The law ofttimes *proves* but little, and *presumes* much. Especially in divorce cases in New York. That's just what it did in this case."

"But, Jack on your own statement, there must have been a trial before a competent court—the case decided against her and she stood convicted of infidelity to her marriage vows. And *you* ask *me* to marry you to such a woman? Preposterous!"

The captain's choler was rising, and he cried out:

"No, *I* don't ask it—Phyllis does. Nay—she demands it! She says she won't marry me unless you agree to perform the ceremony." His voice softened a little—he placed his hand on the bishop's arm, and concluded: "Maybe you will, after you hear the story."

The bishop moved back in his chair and said with some degree of heat:

"I don't want to hear it, nor will I. I accept the facts as stated by you. You must be crazy!"

"No, Doc, I'm not crazy. I am truly and honorably in love at last—*and with a good woman.* Don't miss that!" cried the captain, noticing the

scornful look on his brother's face. "*A good woman.* I've always wanted a home and children, but I've never had either. I lived a miserable existence for six years, as you know. But that's all past and gone, and now I appeal to you to help me. I'd marry Phyllis to-morrow, if she would let me. But she's a churchwoman—she knows of you, has read your books, heard you preach once when you visited New York. You took as your text that day: '*Aye, stone the woman, but let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone.*' It's a peach of a sermon, Doc, I know, because I've heard you preach it several times myself. That inspired her to take the stand she did." Once more he pleaded, "Better let me tell you her story."

"No, Jack, don't, please! It wouldn't make any difference. I admire her for the stand she has taken—that is in her favor, and also your defense—but I *never will* perform the ceremony."

" 'Never' is a long time, Doc."

"Perhaps, but that goes. Outside of your love for this woman, have you stopped to consider? You say you want children—that's natural. But when those children grow up, would you want some one to point the finger of scorn at their

mother?" Here the bishop's voice softened as he continued, "And what of *our* mother—that blessed little woman sleeping upstairs now? What of her? She lives with you now, but what then?"

"Yes, I've thought of all that. Phyllis' heart brims over with mother love, and her innocence is so firmly established in my mind, I am not afraid. As for *our* mother—well—she would still live with me. Phyllis is willing."

"Jack!" cried the bishop, rising. "Do you realize just what you are saying? Our mother to live with a woman without a——"

"Don't say it, Hank—*don't say it!*" exclaimed Jack, advancing to within a pace or two of his brother, "you, nor no other man can attack that woman! I won't stand it! You are bigoted and narrow-minded. What do you preachers mean when you get up on Sunday and proclaim the Gospel of Christ? What do you mean when you say there is not a sin for which atonement cannot be made? All the time you are saying it, you must have your fingers crossed!"

"Jack, Jack! What are you saying?"

"Oh, I'm not through yet! What do you mean when you invite all those that are pure in heart and in mind to come up to your communion table?

There is no apparent reservation in your invitation—but supposing Phyllis should come, and you knew what I had just told you now—what would you say to her? Why, you'd refuse her this blessed sacrament. You'd say, *'You're* an unclean thing—you've sinned beyond reparation' —giving the lie to your words from the pulpit! Why don't you be consistent?"

"I am consistent. Your knowledge of church affairs is very limited."

"Bah! I can confound you in a hundred places in the Bible and in your own prayer book!"

"Now, see here, Jack—I am not going to enter into a religious or an ethical discussion with you. And as for our mother living with you after such a marriage—why, that's out of the question. *I wouldn't permit it.*"

"You!" exclaimed Jack.

"Yes, I."

"Well, perhaps mother might have something to say about that."

"Nonsense, mother has good sense."

"That's just what I am counting on, Doc—mother's good sense, and her great big heart."

"Does she know of your infatuation—your love?"

"In a general way, yes; and she knows you and

I are talking it over, but not all the details. Those I shall tell her later."

"I am glad she is asleep. Now, boy, listen to me," said the bishop, placing both hands on his brother's shoulders. "I am older than you, and since our father died I have been the head of the house. You always were a headstrong boy, rushing in where angels feared to tread. Your army career was a most creditable one—brilliant, in fact. Your work in the secret service stamped you as a man of genius. Your marriage to Veronica White was a colossal mistake. Neither was suited to the other. But you *were* married. Your six years of life together, as you say, were miserable ones. Then came the divorce. You will remember I fought you on that, and for a number of years we didn't speak. But that's all past and gone and things are peaceful. Don't change them."

"Are you still condemning me for my mistake?"

"No, Jack, I'm not condemning you—I pity you. But I don't want you to repeat it—that's all."

The captain was angry. His clerical brother was treating him as a child. Shaking off the bishop's hand, he cried:

"I don't want your pity. My love for this woman is my religion. It is good and beautiful —it's inspiring—it's divine! You are the one to be pitied—you with your narrow-minded views. You—who preach beautiful sermons about the spiritual uplift of mankind; you—who fail to realize that times have changed; you blame women for their cardinal sins—but what of the men? How many of your congregation, sitting there smug and proper as words of wisdom flow from your lips, could afford to have the glaring light of searching publicity turned on their past lives? But if the men did confess all their rottenness and then reformed, you and your churches would call them brothers and sing hallelujahs, because they were saved. But women, poor erring women, let one of them sin—let even so much as a breath come against them and in one blast—name, reputation and character all are gone."

The bishop started to interrupt, but the captain refused to be stopped.

"Oh, yes, I know you'd take these women and put them in some benevolent home to reform them—but they don't want to go there because you might as well write the word 'Scarlet' over the portals of these homes. Failing in this, you

literally send them out in the streets—objects of scorn and ridicule. Why, you won't even hear Phyllis' story. You won't give the girl the chance you would give a burglar caught in the act; that of defense."

Bishop Anderson looked admiringly, but with pitying eyes, at his brother. He admired the manhood that would stick up for a girl with such force. The plea was eloquent.

"Now, see here, Jack, it is not for me to judge the wóman. The courts did that. She had her chance for defense before a competent court of law, and failed. Your own words are proof of that. And as for your love for her being your religion—that's the trouble with you twentieth century business men. Your love for women is personal—physical."

"Your statement is wrong, Doc. My love for her *is* personal—physical—as you term it—in a way. I do love Phyllis' personality—her body—it's sweet and beautiful. Every man's love starts that way—yours did for Helen. But I also love her heart—her spirit—her great, white soul—her character—her desire to do good—and her purity. Get that—*her purity*. If I had only the love of person, I'd be a beast; if only the love of spirit and soul, I'd be an effeminate thing, which

long-haired poets and crazy women call a soul-mate. It's the combination of the two loves which makes it perfect."

Bishop Anderson slowly arose, walked to the mantel, and, taking down an old sabre, turned to his brother and said:

"Boy, boy, you don't know what you are saying—Jack, here is the sword our father carried during the great Civil War—from Sumter to Appomatox he carried it with honor."

Drawing the blade from its sheath and holding it towards the captain, he cried: "Look at that inscription, 'Never draw me without cause, nor sheathe me with dishonor.' Would you dishonor it now? Would you?"

"That sword," replied Captain Anderson, "has nothing to do with it. You are a preacher. You do the praying for this family, and I'll do the fighting."

"Steady, Jack, you are beside yourself, and there is no reason in you. We'll talk this over again."

"No! We'll finish it now!"

"I'm trying hard not to lose my temper."

"I wish with all my heart you would lose it! Forget for a moment you are a preacher—*be a man!*"

But the captain was not through—he had one more charge to fire.

"Wait! You say we had a quarrel over my divorce. True, we did. You railed and ranted against it—condemned me up one side and down the other when all the time you admitted the utter impossibility of Veronica and me living together. But what of your case? Wherein was the difference? If I was a fool to rush in, so, too, were you. Just after you graduated from college you broke into matrimony by marrying Cynthia Perrin. What kind of a life did you lead? Any different from mine? No! worse, if anything. There were petty bickerings, insane jealousies, and you led a regular cat-and-dog existence. Oh, I know it, and so do you. Then Cynthia died. Later you married Helen and now you are happy. The only difference between your case and mine is your divorce was written on a tombstone—while mine was a legal document. The means were different, but the end the same. What have you to say to that?" The bishop did not forget his clerical calling, and, advancing toward his irate brother, exclaimed:

"Why, you idiot!—you're crazy!"

The brother never flinched—but, facing the bishop, raised his hand and said:



"*Stop it, right now, Hank!——or I'll——*" Right here a slight, blue-robed and lace-capped little white-haired woman came between the two strong men

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"Stop it, right now, Hank! or I'll——"

Right here a slight, blue-robed and lace-capped, white-haired little woman came between the two strong men and gently said:

"Boys!"

The bishop and the captain recoiled and simultaneously exclaiming:

"Mother!"

CHAPTER XX

A MOTHER'S WAY

THE bishop was first to recover.

"You heard?" he exclaimed, dropping back a pace or two, and peering into his mother's eyes.

"Yes, I heard. I knew some such talk was taking place between you boys, so I couldn't sleep. I put on the wrapper and stood at the head of the stairs and listened. No, I wasn't eavesdropping, because a mother has a right to hear her boys. Now, come here, both of you."

Slowly these two strong men advanced towards the little mother.

"I'll take that sword, Henry."

Mother Anderson seated herself on the settee, and continued:

"You sit there, Henry, on my right, and you, Jackie, on my left."

These two big boys of hers were like superheated steam boilers. They needed quick hand-

ling, or an explosion would occur. There she sat —a delicate, frail, beautiful little creature, with a son on either side of her. Tenderly kissing the old sword, she laid it down in her lap, and, taking each boy by the hand, she said:

"Do you know, boys, I can well remember the day your father went away to the war, years and years ago. I gave this sword to him, and buckled it around his waist. He looked so brave and handsome as he marched at the head of his company, and I was proud of him—my soldier laddie! As I stood there with aching heart, I held a baby in my arms; his two chubby arms crept round my neck and his sweet voice cooed in my ears: 'Muver'——" Mother Anderson's voice was very tender now, as she continued: "For four years your father was away, boys —fighting; while I—like thousands of other women—was at home—watching—waiting—praying. And all of my comfort in those trying days was—that baby." She paused a moment, and, looking fondly at the bishop, said: "You were that baby, Henry, and, oh, how glad your father was when he came back from the war and saw how sturdy and strong you had grown!"

Then, turning to Jack, she continued:

"A few years after the war you came, Jackie,

boy. You were fair of skin, blue of eye, and had beautiful golden curls. You looked like your father—how proud he was when I presented him with his namesake!" A gentle pat of the hand accompanied this pretty little speech.

"You know, boys," the mother continued, "six babies came to us and our hearts were glad, because there was room for all. But, one by one, four of them have gone home—your father, too, was taken away. That left me all alone—save for you two—big—boys; still my babies."

Under the influence of this voice, the same one that had sung them the lullabies of babyhood, the spirit of these two strong men softened. They realized *Mother* was talking to them. They were "blood of her blood, flesh of her flesh, and bone of her bone." All else was forgotten. Jack's voice was trembling as he gently said:

"Sweet little Mother!"

The bishop placed his arm affectionately over the shoulder of the little woman, who continued, looking first at one and then the other:

"I've tried to bring you up right, and I've succeeded. The pain of bearing you was as nothing compared to my joy in realizing you both are splendid men." Here she broke into a silvery laugh, and said:

"Henry, do you remember the time I cut down a pair of your father's trousers for you? They were blue velvet and you rebelled against wearing them. Well, you went out and deliberately rolled in the mud. You bad boy!"

"I certainly do remember it, Mother," laughed the bishop, "as well as if it were yesterday."

"Yes," broke in Jack, "I remember it, too, Mother. I got those same trousers later." Then, leaning across to the bishop, the brother said: "Remember Duffy's pond, Doc? 'the old swimming hole'—and remember the night you and Billy Durham went to see the 'Black Crook,' and I saw you going in? I had you then, because you were afraid I'd tell dad and mother."

Get two strong men talking over boyhood's happy days—especially with their mother sitting between them—and all rancor and ill-feeling will soon be forgotten. The bishop was smiling as he replied:

"I happily do remember it all, Jack. Great days, those!"

Again the mother laughed heartily, as she said:

"And Henry, the day you went to the Naval Academy—do you remember?—I presented you with an umbrella—and—you—spurned—it!"

"Well, Mother, who ever heard of a naval officer with an umbrella?"

"That's so, Henry, but I didn't realize it then, and I didn't want you to get wet."

Mother Anderson knew the time had come to make her plea for peace.

"No mother," she continued, "ever had better sons, and I am proud of you. You have made mistakes, both of you, but I pray you, don't blight my last few years; they will be but few, because nature will soon play out and I'll join your father and the little ones on the other side. Don't let these last years be embittered by a quarrel between you two. Don't, I beg of you!"

The bishop was not completely at ease yet. He remembered the drubbing Jack had given him.

"But, Mother, don't you see," he cried, "I am worried to death with my diocesan troubles, then Jack comes along with his love affairs."

Jack remained silent, but his mother replied very gently:

"Maybe Jack has more in his case than you think."

"Are you taking his part?"

"No, Henry, I am not taking any one's part. You are both men, and will have to fight your

own battles. Do you remember in our old dining room what was over the door leading into the parlor—that motto?"

"Yes," replied the older boy, "I remember it."

"What was it?"

" 'Let brotherly love continue.' "

"That's it. Now, let it—both of you. Drop any rancorous subject now—my boys." There was a world of pathos in her voice—a plea.

"I am perfectly willing, Mother. But I've wanted Jack to help me in this outside fight I am in. I was about to write him, but to-night he came. You know, Mother, Jack has the keenest deductive sense of any man I ever knew. He can find out something from nothing any time, and now I need that sense."

"Whom are you fighting?" asked Jack quietly.

"Dudley," laconically replied the bishop.

Jack started, arose to his feet, took a step or two and turned. "You mean James Burchard Dudley, editor and proprietor of the Presidio *Banner?*"

"Yes, do you know him?"

"Only by reputation." A peculiar smile overspread Jack's countenance. He was thinking hard. "So you are fighting him, are you? And you want my help." Again he paused, thought,

and then said: "All right, I'll give you my help on one condition."

The mother was looking intently at the bishop, as he asked:

"And that is?"

"Well, we'll declare a truce on my affairs until your fight with Dudley is over. Then you give Phyllis a chance to tell her story."

"That is perfectly fair, Henry!" exclaimed the mother.

The bishop tried to fathom just what was in his brother's mind, but gave it up. But here was the help he most needed—must have. And Jack's request was not unreasonable. He would *hear* the girl's story. He wouldn't be committing himself in any way in doing that.

"All right," said he, "I'll do it."

"Good!" cried the little mother, rising; "shake hands on it—there," clasping her boys' hands in hers. "Now I feel better. My two boys are fighting for and with, not against, each other, and the outcome cannot help but be victorious. I do not know this man, Dudley, nor what his contention is—but I pity him!" Her confidence in her boys was supreme.

"What is the fight about?" asked Jack.

"Too long a story now, old man. I'll tell you

in the morning. It's late and I'm going to bed."

The little mother had accomplished her mission. Her two boys were friends. So she gaily said:

"Now that you two have finished cutting up didoes, I am going to get my sleep." Going up to Jack she put her arms around his neck and, kissing him, said:

"Good night, Jackie boy—you are still my baby."

"Good night, little Mother."

"Coming, Jack?" asked the bishop, as he and his mother moved arm in arm towards the stairway.

"No, not yet, Doc; I'll take another smoke before I retire." Lighting a cigarette, he seated himself at the piano, and again, with one finger, began to play taps.

"All right, Jack. Turn out the lights and lock up, will you?"

"Sure thing, good night."

Perhaps his encounter with his brother had ended in a drawn battle. But somehow or other Jack Anderson felt that the coign of vantage was his own. He had played taps half through when

he turned towards the stairway, and called to the bishop:

"Oh, Doc, where is Twenty-ninth and Windgrove Avenue?"

"Just over at the corner of the park—a block from here. Why?"

"Oh, nothing—just wanted to know."

Once more Jack Anderson smiled—then stole softly up to bed.

CHAPTER XXI

BROTHERS CONFIDE

NEXT morning when the family met at breakfast all signs of the conflict of the night before had passed away. The little mother was serenely happy. Helen Anderson was graciousness personified; the bishop ready for a hard day's work, and Jack anxious to get busy.

After breakfast the brothers retired to the den, closed and locked the door, and then the bishop unburdened himself to the captain on the franchise fight. He told him everything from the day he received Bishop Turner's letter, showing Dudley's antipathy, until the events of the previous day.

Jack listened very intently, and, when the bishop had concluded, said:

"I gather Kearney and Caton are the two men you have to win."

"Yes, that's about it. I was going to try and see Caton to-day and have an interview with him, but I hear he can't be found."

"From what you have told me of the man, I fancy it would only be trying."

"Why?" asked the astonished bishop.

"Unless I miss my guess, you will find Caton will stay out of town until he is needed."

"What makes you think that?"

"From the character of Dudley. If Caton is a wavering cuss, waiting for something, Dudley isn't going to let him stick around where you can reach him. You're a magnetic chap, Doc, and I reckon Dudley knows that. But this Kearney, what of him?"

"I'll tell you, Jack, Kearney is a queer combination. Of course, being Dudley's right-hand man and speaker of the council, one would naturally think Kearney would follow Dudley's desires without question. And, in ordinary cases, I believe he would. But in this franchise question there are so many people involved, whose money would be lost did Dudley win, that I have hopes before the fight is over that Kearney will come our way."

"Turn down his boss? You *are* unsophisticated, Doc."

"Perhaps, but I am convinced Kearney has a heart, and I am going to work on that. I don't believe he would stand for ingratitude on Dudley's part, and if we could get what you would term 'the goods' on Dudley, I think Kearney might be won."

"In other words, 'bite the hand that feeds him.' Do you know Kearney?"

"Sure," laughed the bishop, "I've met him several times. He comes to church frequently, and we have had several pleasant little chats. He's quaint and jolly."

"Joshes you, eh, Doc? Well, it's been my experience that an Irishman who does that is dangerous. There may be a good-sized brick behind every grin."

"Nonsense, Jack! I want you to meet him."

"I'm going to—don't fear. But this Dudley —you know he's immensely wealthy, and it may not be so easy to get the goods on him. These rich cusses generally have a large and experienced staff of lawyers to cover up their tracks, and keep them out of trouble."

The bishop then described in minute detail the stormy interview he had had with Dudley the day before, and, in closing, said: "I met a Miss Sherman in Dudley's office, his secretary, I take it,

and a very pretty girl; she is a churchwoman, and I hope to see her at service."

When the bishop mentioned Mary Sherman's name, Jack Anderson yawned and said:

"Cut out the women, Doc, they're not mixed up in this fight."

"I merely mentioned it as an incident. Miss Sherman is a very sweet, pretty girl, and I can't conceive of her working for a man like Dudley."

"Women are queer creatures. You say she is pretty?"

"Yes—beautiful."

Jack arose and laughingly said: "Guess I'd better tell Helen to keep her eyes on you, Doc."

"Nonsense, Jack," pleasantly replied his brother, "being a bishop doesn't preclude my admiring female beauty—does it?"

"Not on your life, Doc. That's the man of it."

They talked a short while longer, and the captain said:

"Now, I've got all the details and here's where I begin. You tell Flanagan to have Rabbi Wise, Father Leahy and Dr. Arnold keep a tight rein on the eleven councilmen on our side. Don't let any of them get away. You can't get to Caton, but I'll find him. You also get your work in on

Kearney, and I'll start to find out what I can about Dudley. I want to know every move he makes in his office."

"How are you going to do that?"

"Never mind how, Doc—I'm going to do it, that's all. Just remember this: I am in this fight to help you—but I must work in *my own way* without any interference. Don't forget, old man, what my interest is in the whole matter. It's not unselfish, you know, because I'm fighting for the girl."

"Yes, I know," said the bishop softly. He did know, and it was a sore spot in his heart. But much could happen in three months, and maybe in the excitement Jack would forget this woman. New York was over twenty-five hundred miles away.

The brothers went downtown together, and after luncheon, separated. Mother Anderson and Helen spent the day shopping and driving about the parks. Both were tired when they returned and after dinner the mother and Jack took a little walk. They were gone about an hour, and when they returned the ladies retired, leaving the bishop and captain together.

"Well, Doc—what luck?"

"Not much. I called at Caton's office and also

at his residence, and in both instances was informed he was out of town for a few days."

"Excuse my laughing! Now, let me tell you something. He won't be back for three months. He's in Yuma, Arizona."

"Yuma! Where's that?"

"That's the place the Lord didn't finish when He made the world."

"What's Caton doing in that out-of-the-way place?"

"Oh, he's special correspondent of *The Banner*. Of course, that's a subterfuge. Dudley's keeping him out of the way."

"Jack, where did you get this information?"

The captain grinned, as he replied: "Well, you see, Doc, when mother and I were walking in the park this evening, a little bird came and sat down beside me, and whispered it in my ear—that's how."

"But——"

"No 'buts' about it, Doc; I got it, and it's authentic, and that's all there is to it. You are not to ask questions—and I'll give you facts. Now, I'm going to get Caton. Within a few days I'm going to disappear for a while,—but I'll keep you posted."

"Where are you going?"

"New England, New York, and then maybe Arizona."

"New York?"

"Yes, New York. I know what's going through your mind right now, Doc, and I'll promise you I won't see the girl *in New York,* not until after your fight is over."

The bishop was relieved. He wanted to keep his brother away from the woman as long as possible. And he knew Jack's promise was as good as his bond and would be kept.

There was nothing very exciting during the remainder of the week, and Sunday morning the entire family went to service in the temple. The bishop preached, taking as his text—as he had told Kearney he would—"Lord, I thank Thee I am not like other men,"—*the Pharisee.* Kearney was there, and so was Mary Sherman. There was no mistaking the tone of the bishop's discourse, and the Irishman enjoyed every word of it.

After service Mary Sherman stepped out without being seen. But the bishop caught Kearney, and introduced him to Jack.

"I am glad to meet you, Captain Anderson—I've heard of you."

"Pleasantly, I hope, Mr. Kearney," replied the captain, smiling, but looking straight at Dudley's right-hand man.

Kearney returned the look. Here was the man in the "Carew woman's case!" He sized him up, and replied:

"Nothing otherwise, Captain."

At dinner that day Jack said: "Doc, I like Kearney. You go for him for all you're worth. Only be diplomatic. You can't drive that man any place, but you may lead him."

Later, while sitting on the porch, the bishop observed:

"There's Miss Sherman, Jack—Dudley's secretary."

"Who, that tall girl walking through the park? And you call her good looking?"

"Surely, don't you?"

"I'm not much of a judge, Doc—what do you think of her, Mother?"

"She's too far away for me to see her face, but she carries herself well."

The little mother gave Jack's arm a squeeze, but that worthy only grinned.

That evening Kearney had supper with Dudley. He always did on Sunday evenings. While they were having their cigars out on the lawn, he said:

"I found out this morning what a Pharisee is, Jim. Bishop Anderson preached on the gent. He's a mean, ornery cuss that thinks he's better than any one else on earth. Pretty nifty talk."

"Giving me hell again, was he?"

"Naw, he *gave you* hell the first Sunday he was here. To-day he just shoved you in it—that's all."

Dudley just grunted—he would bide his time—allow the bishop to "run down," as he called it.

"I also met the bishop's brother, the captain."

"You did! What's he doing here?"

"Just visiting, I guess. He's a pretty smart-looking chap, too. Looks more like a fighter than his brother—though we will admit the bishop can go some."

"Bah!"

"This captain looks like he might fight in a *different* way from his brother. More activity and less words as it were."

"Both tarred with the same stick, Kearney, and I'll crush 'em. Wait till I find the Carew woman. She'll turn up and I'll see her."

"Well, she hasn't turned up yet, Jim."
"No, but she will."
"Maybe."

CHAPTER XXII

JACK LEAVES FOR PARTS UNKNOWN

MONDAY and Tuesday were very busy days for the bishop. His two daughters returned from school and he and Helen were happy. So was the little mother who doted on her grandchildren. Jack was left pretty much to his own resources and spent the time, as he said, "nosing around." Tuesday evening, just after dark the mother and Jack took another walk in the park, and that night, when the brothers were alone, the captain said:

"I'm going to beat it out of town to-morrow, Doc."

"Where?"

"I'll tell you frankly. I'm on Caton's trail—don't ask me any more. I expect to be back in a week or ten days, and then I hope to arrange my own affairs. This thing evidently is going to take all summer."

The next night at nine he bade them all good-bye and left. They heard from him once from Chicago—again a card dated New York, and, finally, a telegram from Vermont, simply saying, "Trip successful—starting west."

In due time he arrived, and when he and the bishop were alone, he said:

"Well, I think we can count on Caton's vote."

"How?"

"Oh, I believe I will have him where he'll have to vote the way I say, or be run out of town, or worse."

"Why?"

"Well, you see, Doc, I got a tip on Caton. Found out where he came from—up in Vermont—and went there. There I learned some things which made me want to know more, and Caton is the only man who can give me the information." Jack stopped for a moment and then continued: "Caton isn't a hard man to trace; by the way, his real name isn't Caton."

"No," asked the bishop; "what is it then?"

"That I shall tell you later, and then we shall see what we shall see."

"Are you going to Yuma to see Caton?" inquired the bishop.

"No," grinned his brother, "*I'm* not going, but

my man Raymond will be here to-night—and *he* is."

"Yes, and then——"

"Wait a minute, Doc, I'm doing this my way. Now let up with your questions and watch the results. I can land Caton. Can you land Kearney?"

"I don't know," answered the bishop, with a deprecatory shake of the head—and here the conversation ended.

Both sides settled down to a long, hard siege. Dudley's dozen were secure. Caton was away, and Kearney was always on deck. The weather grew very warm, but the bishop and his associates never lagged. They were always pounding, but each day they realized the stone wall they were up against—twelve to eleven—and Kearney and Caton. Caton voting against the American would mean thirteen to eleven; voting with them the vote would be twelve to twelve—and then came Kearney.

The bishop met Kearney several times in a very casual manner, but never could corner him. Kearney knew what was in the bishop's mind, and avoided having any private and personal interview with this magnetic man. Kearney knew the bishop was right, but he was working for

Dudley. It was his living—and, anyway, he had been too long in the traces to break over now.

"Jack," said the bishop one warm August evening, "we've got to get something on Dudley."

"Sure, I know that, Doc—and I have a clue which may lead some place. I got it last night. Don't ask me what it is."

The next day, however, Jack said to his brother, "Doc, I've got something on Dudley—and if we can prove it, I believe we not only can swing Kearney, but the whole push."

"What is it, Jack?"

For an hour the brothers talked, and at the end the bishop said: "You're a wonder, Jack—if the story can be proven. But where have you been getting all this information from?"

"The birds in the park, Doc. You'll know some time—but not yet," Jack grinned.

"I've a wire from Raymond. He has located Caton, and he'll never leave him for one instant until the fight is over. He will deliver Caton to you and Flanagan, and I'm going to handle this Dudley lead myself."

"Certainly, I wouldn't want any one else to handle it."

Dudley hadn't been idle all summer, though there wasn't much for him to do. His bunch were lined up, and Caton was out of the way until he came back to vote. *The Tribune* and *Scimitar* kept up their pounding, but Dudley just grinned. The plum was ripening in the summer sun, and in a few days he would pluck it.

CHAPTER XXIII

A CERTAIN "HOWARD RAYMOND"

YUMA, Arizona, as Captain Anderson so vividly described it, was the jumping off place of the world, and when Robert Caton landed there, after having been employed by Kearney as a "special correspondent" for *The Presidio Banner*, he was far from being in a very agreeable frame of mind. When Kearney put him aboard "The Limited," bound East, he gave Caton two hundred dollars' expense money and his first week's salary, or three hundred and fifty dollars in all. With this amount Caton felt reasonably pleasant until he struck the great American desert. Here the heat almost shriveled him, and he made frequent trips to the buffet car to alleviate his feelings. He did not succeed to any great extent, and when he landed in Yuma he was not possessed of a lucid idea.

Two days later he came to his senses in the

best room of Yuma's leading hostelry, about as woebegone a specimen of humanity as could be found in a day's travel. He pushed a button and presently a Mexican bellboy appeared.

"Where in creation am I?" growled Caton.

The brown-skinned boy grinned and replied:

"In Yuma, Arizona, *los estados, unidos, señor.*"

"Yuma," gasped Caton; "oh, yes," and then he remembered. He was a special correspondent of *The Presidio Banner*—and Yuma was to be his field of endeavor for the remainder of the summer. A glance out of the window over the tops of the adobe houses caused Caton to gasp:

"Good Heavens! what a dump to throw a man into—sand, sand, sand, as far as you can see! A bunch of halfbreed greasers, a few slab-sided cattle, and a million fleas. I won't stay here—danged if I will. I'll wire Dudley."

Right here he ceased growling. What would he wire Dudley? What could he wire him? He had accepted his money and was on his payroll. One hundred and fifty dollars weekly! Not so bad, even for Yuma. Caton knew Dudley's power; knew he could break him the minute he made one false move. He gave up in disgust, determined to make the best of a bad bargain.

A few days later, under the influence of mescal and pulque, he did think of Pat Kearney. He had engineered this deal, and to Kearney Caton would appeal for relief. Accordingly, he wired:

"Yuma is a perfect hole. How long must I stay?"

That afternoon his answer came:

"So long as Yuma is a hole, what do you care, since you say it's a perfect one. You stay there until September 21st, then come here. Salary check for current week mailed to-day.

"(Signed) KEARNEY."

"That's what I call a rotten joke," grumbled Caton, as he tore the message to bits, and cast them adrift on the dry Arizona breeze.

The summer wore away, and Caton had good sense enough to keep to himself. No one in Yuma cared a rap about who he was or what he was doing there, so long as he paid his way and minded his own business. And these things he did.

One hot afternoon in late August, Caton was down at the Southern Pacific depot when the Limited rolled in, and saw among the motley

crowd of passengers a dapper-looking six-footer get off the train. Civilization was written all over the man's appearance, and he assuredly did look good to Caton. The stranger had a pleasant face and looked like a man who would be able to take care of himself under any circumstances. A short while later Caton saw him enter the principal hotel, register and go to a room. The register revealed his name—"Howard Raymond, Chicago."

"Chicago!" ruminated Caton, "the big city up by the *great cool lake.* What in blazes would bring a man from Chicago to Yuma, and in August. Phew! Must be mighty important."

And, right there, Caton determined to find out all about Mr. Raymond. It would be a digression from the daily grind of doing nothing.

That evening Caton waited until Raymond had entered the dining room, and then followed. He seated himself at the same table with the Chicagoan.

A frontier hotel dining table just naturally promotes acquaintance between men and Raymond made the first advance.

"Fine evening, eh?"

"Fine evening!" exclaimed Caton. "You think so?"

"Sure," smiled Raymond, "fine for me. But permit me to introduce myself. I'm Mr. Howard Raymond, of Chicago. Out here for my health," tapping his chest significantly.

"Oh," thought Raymond, "a busted lunger." Then aloud:

"You don't look it, Mr. Raymond. My name is Caton—from——" then he stopped. Raymond did not appear to notice Caton's hesitation, and the two men shook hands.

"No," continued Raymond, "I know I do not look it, but I just caught it in time. This climate ought to help me."

"If you want dryness, it sure will," answered Caton. "I've been here nearly two months, and there hasn't been enough moisture to rust a tack."

Raymond laughed. "Suppose we have some 'moisture' now?"

"Sure," acquiesced Caton.

Thus a feeling of camaraderie was formed, and the time passed more pleasantly for Caton. His weekly check from Dudley enabled him to do his part, and Raymond appeared to be in funds.

September came along and about the fifteenth Raymond announced he would shortly be leaving.

"Going away?" queried Caton. "Where to?"

"Oh, I guess I'll take a run up to Phoenix. Want to go 'long?"

"I'd like to, but I can't now." Caton remembered Kearney's instructions.

Raymond expressed his regret, and, as this was to be their last evening together, proposed a quiet little jollification, to which Caton willingly agreed. They made the rounds of the various resorts, and at each place had a drink or two. That is, Caton did most of the drinking, while Raymond fed him up.

Caton was quite a rounder, but could stand up under a load a bit better than most men. A certain amount of liquor made him sing; a little more made him garrulous, and the third stage made him want to fight. Raymond endured the singing stage until Caton sang about "The Old Green Mountain State." Three times Caton bawled out this chorus, and each time Raymond ordered up another round.

Finally, when the time appeared ripe, Raymond steered Caton to their hotel, and took him to his room. One more drink and Raymond casually observed:

"You're fond of the 'Old Green Mountain State,' eh, Caton?"

"Fond of it," bubbled Caton, "fond of it.

Why, confound it, man, I love it—was born and brought up there."

"Sure, you lived in Burnham, didn't you?" Raymond leaned forward and looked Caton straight in the eye.

"Burnham!" exclaimed Caton, "who said anything about Burnham?"

"Why, I did," Raymond answered. "I was up there last summer, and met a pleasant-faced woman named—let me see"—and pausing a moment while through Caton's befuddled brain began to crowd memories of other days—"oh, yes, Nellie Brant—that's her name—and, Caton, she had a boy nine years old—a nameless boy. She called him Robert Carroll, after his father. I wonder if you knew them?"

Raymond stopped and Caton stared as if in a trance. His brain cleared slightly, he realized there was something beneath the exterior of this cool and collected man opposite, which boded ill for him.

"Nellie Brant! A boy—Robert Carroll!" Caton gasped.

"Yes, Caton," coldly replied Raymond, "and, come to think of it, the boy resembled you. Strange, wasn't it?"

Caton got up and paced the room. His brain

was running riot. What did this smooth Chicagoan know? Well, he wouldn't give in. All that had been said might have been pure bluff. Anyway, he wouldn't let Raymond get away with it. He'd beat him at his own game. Resuming his seat, he said:

"Your story is interesting, Raymond, *extremely* interesting, but it doesn't concern me, not in the least."

"Doesn't it?" snapped Raymond; "well, then, perhaps this will," and suddenly he held a photograph of a sweet faced woman and a sturdy boy in front of Caton.

Caton was dumbfounded at the likeness of the woman and boy. A flood of memories rushed over him. He placed his hands in front of his eyes as if to shut out the scenes,—his body rocked to and fro.

"God help me!" he groaned. Then suddenly collecting himself he looked up and in a hopeless, hollow voice said:

"Well, Raymond, what do you want? You've got the goods on me."

A gleam of triumph flashed from Raymond's eyes, as he replied:

"Restitution for that woman and that boy."

"Yes, all right," answered the now subdued Caton.

"But, before that, there is something else."

"What?"

"You are down here on the payroll of James Burchard Dudley, of Presidio. You are supposed to be a correspondent of *The Presidio Banner,* but, in reality, you were sent down here to get you out from under the influence of Bishop Anderson in the Presidio franchise fight, and you are to return in time to record your vote against the American company. Now you're going back to Presidio with me, and you're going to vote against Dudley and his crowd; then you're going back to Vermont and play the man."

Every word uttered by Raymond sank in Caton's soul like fire, but he feared Dudley.

"Not vote against Jim Dudley, "The Big Chief!" " he exclaimed. "If I do, he'll break me."

"Break you, eh?" sneered Raymond. "Well, which would you rather do—be broken by Dudley, or arrested by Vermont?" He paused a moment, then continued:

"Come, Caton, be a man. You have a chance to do two good things, and then start all over

again. Beat Dudley, who is wrong, then go back to Vermont, and——"

"Stop," interrupted the now thoroughly cowed Caton, "I'll do as you say. I'm licked, and I know it."

"No, you're not licked, Caton, you've won a big, decent victory."

That morning the telegraph wires bore this message to Bishop Anderson:

"Man penitent. Will act as you desire. Hiding until we come north.

"RAYMOND."

The council was to meet September 25th, and ten days previous Jack Anderson disappeared from view. On the 22nd, Kearney wired Caton to come home. The telegraph company reported "Non-delivery. Party left town yesterday." Here was a shock for Dudley. Where was Caton? Kearney, too, was doing some thinking. Neither of them could reason it out. But on the evening of the 24th, Caton appeared in Presidio.

Of course, Kearney heard of it, and going to Caton's house met that gentleman. He also met Raymond, who stuck as close to Caton as a brother. Kearney wanted some private conver-

sation with Caton, who well knew just what would be said. But Raymond didn't move. Finally Caton blurted out:

"No use, Pat—I'm against you on the franchise. My vote will be counted for the American."

Kearney looked at Caton and then at Raymond,—the game was up. Some influence had been at work on Caton. But what—what? For once Kearney had missed a trick and he wasn't in a very pleasant frame of mind when he made his report to Dudley.

"I told you, Jim, that bishop would jolt you. He's got Caton sewed up and a great big guy over there watching him, so he won't get away."

Dudley was furious. "Wait until I get Caton—he won't be able to live in this town, but even yet we have our twelve, and you're in the chair."

"Sure, I know that! I was in hopes, however, I would not have to vote on this bloomin' franchise."

"But you will vote, Kearney?" anxiously inquired Dudley. He couldn't lose now.

"Sure, I'll vote all right, Dudley."

That evening Bishop Anderson received a wire

from his brother Jack, dated Wheeling, West Virginia, saying:

"Arrive ten to-morrow morning. Witness with me—a peach."

"Glorious!" shouted the bishop, and that night he retired early, to be ready for to-morrow's battle. He had the ammunition with which to attack—not Dudley—not the council—but could he get Kearney? That was his man, and, while the bishop well knew Kearney's loyalty to Dudley, he was hoping and praying for the miracle to happen.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 25th dawned bright and clear; there was just a suspicion of the tang of fall in the air. *The Tribune* and the early editions of *The Scimitar* were filled with a resumé of the bitter fight, and they made one last plea to the council. They were really hoping against hope; they knew the "twelve to twelve with Kearney in the chair situation," and believed the battle lost. So did Rabbi Wise, Dr. Arnold, Father Leahy and Flanagan. They admitted the bishop had made a good fight, but, *as usual,* Dudley would win.

The bishop hadn't informed them of his latest news. He wanted to be sure, before he did. He made up his mind before the council voted he would make one last plea to their manhood and honor. If he did go down, his colors would be flying.

The council was scheduled to meet at twelve o'clock, noon, and long before that hour, the space reserved for the general public was filled to overflowing with people, anxious to see the last act of the franchise fight. It was an heterogeneous crowd of all sorts and conditions. Some came out of idle curiosity—but to many of them, stockholders of the old American, the result of this meeting meant everything. If Dudley's franchise ordinance was adopted, their beautifully engraved stock certificates would not be worth the paper upon which they were printed —and they were hoping against hope for something to turn apparent defeat of their interests into victory.

Mother Anderson and Helen were there. So were Flanagan, Rabbi Wise, Dr. Arnold, Father Leahy, and a score of others, who had been assisting Bishop Anderson all through the hot summer campaign just drawing to a close. The gloom of uncertainty was on their faces. The only person in the audience who seemed the least bit happy was Mother Anderson. She nodded and smiled, greeting her acquaintances in her pleasant manner.

The members of the council slowly assembled, and, as each man moved to his desk, a hundred

pairs of eyes were focussed upon him, in hopes that thought waves might either hold him fast, or make him change his mind, be he for or against their interests. Caton came shambling in, followed by Raymond; Caton—the uncertain. But there was no uncertainty in his own mind—he would vote as the man Raymond told him to—and that evening his berth was reserved on a train which would bear him back to the "woman and child in Vermont." His term as councilman would expire next month, and well did he know what Dudley would do to him after this fight was over.

Was Dudley there? Surely—but not out among the crowd. He entered the speaker's private office, and found Kearney sitting in his big chair, feet cocked up on the desk, smoking his usual black cigar. Kearney was simply waiting for the time when he would set the wheels in motion to do Dudley's bidding. In his heart he was sick of the whole business.

"Well, Kearney," said Dudley, rubbing his hands in a gleeful manner, "to-day sees the finish of this fight."

"Yes, it does, Dudley," replied the speaker, dropping his feet and biting his cigar, "council meets in a few minutes and about all we have to

do is to pass the ordinance. Mayor Schultz is waiting to sign it. Then it's all over." He paused a moment and then concluded: "Satisfied, Jim?"

"Satisfied? Certainly," Dudley replied grimly. "I said I'd beat that bishop, and I guess I have." There was joy in his gruff tones—another victory—another scalp—and Presidio more securely in his power than ever.

"Well, it's been a merry old fight, Jim. You've got to give the bishop credit for that. He's fought hard and stirred this old town up. There won't be enough left of the present administration to sweep up when the election comes off in November."

"Bah! What do we care for that? The trick will be turned, and, besides, Kearney, the reform wave won't last. Two years from now the people will have forgotten it, and then we'll all go back in power. You know even New York has a reform wave once in a while. Strong and Seth Low both beat Tammany—but what did it amount to? One term, and the tiger came right back to the public crib."

Dudley was sure of his statements—he was an adept in politics and couldn't be mistaken.

"Sure, I know that, Chief. But remember

what that man said?" pointing to a large painting of Abraham Lincoln over the desk. "'You can't fool all the people all the time,' and this bunch of Scandinavian—Jew—Irish—Russian—German-American citizens of Presidio is pretty well worked up. All they needed was a leader. Well, they got one in this Bishop Anderson, and as long as he sticks around he's going to keep you up nights."

But Dudley thought different. "Nothing to it, Kearney—he's going to be the worst licked man in Presidio to-day, and then he'll quit."

"Quit! Huh! You fool yourself! I heard him lecture once on a chap named John Paul Jones, and I reckon the bishop and John Paul are some kin. 'He's just begun to fight.'"

Dudley eyed his man closely. Was Kearney beginning to hedge? Impossible thought! "You're dreaming, Kearney. Got all the men lined up? Sure?"

"Twelve of them are roped—branded and tied like yearling calves, and I am the thirteenth. Lucky little guy, ain't I?"

Dudley laughed loudly. "Good!"

Kearney rose to his feet—tossed away his cigar, saying:

"Do you ever forgive an enemy, Dudley?"

"No, Kearney, I haven't time. I'll tell you what—you do the forgiving and I'll do the fighting." Dudley was in rare good humor.

There was almost a feeling of disgust in the speaker's mind as he heard his employer's words. What manner of man was he? After twenty-five years in his service Kearney still wondered.

"Oh, very well," he quietly said, glancing at his watch. "Going to stick around and see the obsequies?"

"No," replied the chief, drawing on his auto gloves, "I don't care to be around to gloat. I'll do that in my office. You can get me there on the 'phone, if you want me. So long," and left. He paid no attention to the scowls of people he saw—what did he care? He had beaten them all once again. Some day they would learn how useless it was to fight him.

Kearney watched this confident, cock-sure editor depart—and, shaking his head, slowly went out into the council chamber. He spoke to councilmen, pausing here and there for a moment for a word with some political shyster, masquerading under the garb of decency. His *twelve* were there—he would count them and then—and then —*he'd* vote—and *good-bye.*

Kearney was standing by the railing talking to

Rowell, of *The Tribune,* when Bishop Anderson came in, with a stern, set face—but not yet looking like a beaten man. He saw Kearney, and came towards him with outstretched hand.

"Good morning, Mr. Kearney," he said, smiling.

Kearney returned the handshake, and said:

"Morning, Bishop." He marvelled that this man would shake hands with him, when in a few minutes, his—Kearney's—vote would beat him. He continued:

"Do you know, Bishop, you're the best loser I ever saw in my life."

"Loser?" replied the bishop with a peculiar smile. "We haven't lost yet."

"No, but it'll be all over in a few minutes. Just a little formality of counting the votes, you know."

Again the smile. Kearney wondered what it meant.

"Well, we will wait until they are counted," then, putting one hand on the speaker's shoulder, the bishop continued in a very earnest voice: "Kearney, haven't you a conscience?"

Kearney was uneasy. This bishop was most magnetic, and there was an irresistible sincerity about him hard to evade.

"Conscience, Bishop!" he exclaimed—"a newspaper man and a politician with a conscience! Never heard of it. I had one of those things when I first came here, but this game has killed it."

"Kearney, I once officiated at a funeral, and in the midst of the ceremony the supposed corpse came to life. It was just a case of suspended animation. Perhaps that is the case with your conscience."

"Nothing to it," and Kearney laughed as he spoke, "my conscience is deader than a door-nail, but, Bishop Anderson, I want to say this: you've put up a dandy fight, and you're the best man that ever came to Presidio. You're beaten, though; Dudley always wins. I like you personally, and only fought you because I had to—when this fight is over, I'll back you in anything you undertake. But keep out of politics. It's not your game. You're too honest!"

The bishop smiled at the explosive tribute.

"Thank you, Kearney, I appreciate what you say. But don't forget, the worst is yet to come."

What did the bishop mean? Why that everlasting, enigmatical smile?

"All right, Bishop, I won't. Going to stay for the pow-wow?"

"Yes, I think I'll see it through."

Kearney went to the speaker's desk, wishing it was all over. The bishop was on his nerves.

Mother Anderson had been watching her son, as he conversed with Kearney. When the bishop joined the ladies she inquired:

"Who is that man, Henry?"

"That is Mr. Kearney, Mother, the one man who can win this fight for us."

"Will he, do you think, dear?" anxiously inquired his wife.

"I don't know, Helen, I am going to give him a chance." The bishop glanced at his watch and anxiously said: "I wonder where Jack is. He wired he would reach Presidio this morning, and here it is nearly noon."

Mother Anderson smiled. "Don't you worry about Jack. If he said he would be here, he will. Where has he been, anyway? Ever since you boys have been in this fight I haven't seen much of Jack. He's been in New York, Chicago, Ohio, and a dozen other places. At least, that is what you tell me. I haven't heard from him."

Helen Anderson smiled, and said: "Well, you've been having a good time, haven't you, Mother Anderson?"

"Certainly I have—that's my business in life—

having a good time. But I don't like this being kept in the dark. What is it all about?"

"You wouldn't understand, Mother," impatiently replied the bishop. "Later I will tell you." The little mother just smiled.

Mr. Flanagan came in at this time, and, after greeting the ladies, said:

"Good morning, Bishop."

"Well, Flanagan, here we are at the last hurdle."

"Yes, Doctor, and it looks bad."

Plainly, Flanagan was worried. His face showed that. Here he was up against a situation wherein the labor of a lifetime must come to naught—all on account of the ruthless ambition of one man. Flanagan had a right to be worried. It was no wonder that he scanned the bishop's face for one ray of hope. But the bishop gave no sign.

"What about Caton?" asked the bishop; "are we sure of him?"

"Caton? Oh, he'll stand hitched—your brother's man, Raymond, has him so he must vote our way. And that brings us up against the proposition I outlined to you some months back. A tie vote with Kearney in the chair.

"And that means — well, Bishop — that means——"

Dr. Anderson thought a moment and then broke in:

"I've been talking to Kearney, and he seems obdurate, but Mr. Flanagan, there is one chance yet. That brother of mine started off on a still hunt ten days ago. He will return this morning with an important witness."

Flanagan looked startled. Like a drowning man he grasped at the straw.

"Witness!" he exclaimed, "what witness? Do you know?"

"Yes, Flanagan, I know," gently replied the bishop, "but I can't tell even you just now."

"Was there still a chance?" thought Flanagan. "Can this powerful preacher and man win a fight, which seems so hopelessly lost? I hope to goodness he can!" and, shaking his head, he went over and sat with the ladies—first speaking a word with Rabbi Wise, Dr. Arnold and Father Leahy, who had come in.

At this point Jack Anderson entered the room. The bishop saw him, and, going quickly to his side, shook his hand. "I thought you were never coming," he whispered.

"Train late," laconically replied the captain. "I just got in."

Mother Anderson, at this time, caught sight of her youngest son, and started towards him. Jack tried to stop her by saying, "Hello, Mother. I've no time for kissing now"—but the little mother would not be denied. Her boy had been away for a long time, so it seemed to her. She came to him and exclaimed:

"It's a great pity you haven't time to kiss your mother after ten days' absence! Now, sir, give an account of yourself." And, without any more ado, she threw her arms round his neck and kissed him, while a number of the spectators broadly smiled.

Jack returned the kiss, and, with mock severity, said: "Here's where I exercise my authority." Taking her gently by the arm, he led her over to her seat and continued: "Now, you sit there until I come for you. The old Doc and I have some business together. Howdy, Mr. Flanagan—you and 'Mrs. Bishop' watch this kittenish mother of mine, will you?"

"Well, I never!" laughed Mother Anderson. "Under guard!"

CHAPTER XXV

CAPTAIN ANDERSON'S REPORT

MOTIONING the bishop to follow him, Captain Anderson led the way into an ante-room.

"Well, what luck?" anxiously inquired the bishop.

Jack handed him a slip of paper, saying, "There's the note, and"—pointing to the corner —"there's your man."

The bishop eagerly scanned the paper, and then allowed his eyes to move towards the corner. There, huddled up in a chair, he observed the pitiful wreck of a once powerful man, now old, feeble, ragged, and unkempt. Evidently he labored under some sort of stress of mind, for his lips moved as if in speech.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the bishop, "where did you get him?"

"At the county poor farm at Wheeling, West Virginia. They were glad enough to get rid of him."

"But the proof, Jack! Where is the proof? What effect will that miserable fellow's word have against a man like Dudley? Look at him!"

"I've been looking at him for a week and he has not been a pleasing sight. I offered him new clothes, but he refused—said he wanted Jim Dudley to see him as he is, and I don't know but what it's better that he does. He will make more of an impression."

"But don't you see, Jack, we must have some other evidence—documentary proof—that will stand, and back up our assertions. You've kept me posted on every move Dudley has made since you came here. What has gone on in his office has been like an open book—you haven't missed a trick. But now you are going to fail us—at the last moment, at the most important time of all. *We must have the letters.*"

"Well, I'm after them, Doc. I just arrived in town, and haven't had a chance to see *my man* yet. I'll go and 'phone now. Back in a minute —say a word to Alberts." And with that the captain was gone.

The bishop went over to the old man and introduced himself. "Mr. Alberts, I am Bishop Anderson—the captain's brother."

Slowly the old man raised his weary eyes and

gazed at the man before him. His head nodded as he looked and said:

"Howdy, your reverence. The captain told me all about you. Fine man, that captain."

"Yes, he is. Now, Mr. Alberts, are you certain the man you knew as a boy back in Crescent and James Burchard Dudley are one and the same?"

"Am I sure?" the old man cried shrilly—"*you bet* I am sure. The captain showed me his picture, an' I'd know that face in the darkness of a dungeon."

"Steady, man, you won't have to go into a dungeon to see it. You'll see it here to-day."

"'Sall right, your reverence; I'll be on hand, don't you forget it." The old man was almost beside himself with anger, as his clenched fist fell feebly upon his knee.

"There, there," said the bishop soothingly, in an effort to calm him.

Meanwhile, Jack Anderson went directly to a telephone booth—was in there a half minute, and then made a bee line for a taxicab.

"Eleven-twenty, Presidio—quick," he ordered, as he slammed the door. Arriving there the chauffeur was told to wait and hurriedly the captain entered a well-known confectionary store, taking a seat far back in a corner. Only a few

minutes elapsed before Mary Sherman—Dudley's secretary—hurriedly entered, and, spying the captain, approached and seated herself directly opposite him at the same table.

"Hardly a minute to spare," she whispered—"I am supposed to be shopping. Here"—slipping him a large, plain envelope, "are the letters and copies you wanted." The captain took them eagerly, without opening the envelope.

"You are a wonder, dear!" said he, pressing his palm to her tiny gloved hand.

"No, Jack—I'm just a woman fighting for my happiness."

"And mine," he added tenderly, as he watched her rise and go her way.

Finishing his seltzer quickly, he then, with seeming leisure, paid his bill and left the shop. Once in the waiting cab, he shouted—"City Hall"—and away sped the vehicle, turning the corner on two wheels. As he flew along his thoughts reverted to the beautiful woman who had, but a moment before, sat before him. Knowing her great sorrow, he pitied her from the bottom of his heart—and loved her all the more. At City Hall he found the bishop, with his mother, and wife, awaiting him. He merely nodded toward the ladies, then calling the bishop to one side, handed

him an envelope. Quickly breaking the seal, the bishop scanned the contents eagerly.

"Well, Jack, *you are* a brick! Where did you get them?"

"From a little bird in the park," grinned the captain. "They make the case so strong, even Dudley can't get around what they say."

"Indeed not—here's where we beat him into pulp. Now you go out and stay with old man Alberts until I want you. Then bring him in."

"Fine job, I get," laughed the captain. Immediately the bishop summoned into counsel Flanagan, Rabbi Wise, Dr. Arnold and Father Leahy, the five gentlemen entering into an earnest conference in the ante-room.

"Bully for us!" exclaimed Flanagan on hearing the good news. "We may not win this franchise fight to-day, but Bishop, we'll show Jim Dudley up in such a way he can't put anything over on us hereafter."

"He won't try to, Flanagan," responded the bishop emphatically. "I told you I was going to beat him and then win him over to our side. Now *I know* I've got Kearney won—or will have, rather, when he knows what we know—and then, mark my words, Dudley will come over." There was no uncertainty in the bishop's tone. But the

other gentlemen were not so sure, and, shaking their heads, they returned to the council chamber.

Kearney saw them go and come, and wondered what was in the wind. However, he felt sure that their case was hopeless. One poll of the council members and "American Gas" would pass on to Dudley.

The hands of the large clock pointed to twelve noon when the speaker brought his gavel down with a resounding whack on the mahogany before him. President Kearney looked very solemn as he glanced about the chamber. "The council will be in order!" said he gravely, and took his seat. The curtain was up and the drama about to begin.

The formalities of roll call were quickly over; the reading of the minutes of the last meeting dispensed with by unanimous consent and Kearney was now ready to play Dudley's last card—the trump—an ace, as he thought. When the regular order was called for he asked most casually:

"Mr. Clerk, what comes first on the regular order?"

"An ordinance granting a fifty-year franchise to *The National Gas Company of Presidio*. The

ordinance has gone through its third reading. A vote on its passage is now in order."

"Gentlemen, are you ready for the vote?" asked the speaker. An awful stillness came over the assemblage as this question was put. Then there came loud cries of "Vote," "Vote," "Vote," and, strange to say, no voice was heard in protest. Kearney gave a sigh of relief. The opposition had "given up the ship," thought he. Nevertheless, the silence was puzzling. He did not know that just before he had called the council to order, word had been passed along by the bishop to "sit quiet" and "vote" when the time came. While Kearney cogitated, Bishop Anderson advanced to the rail, and said:

"Mr. Speaker, before this question is put to a vote, may I say a few words?"

Instantly Dudley's "dozen" broke into action and there were cries of "Aw, cut it out"—"Regular order"—"We've heard your story for months." To the captain outside there seemed a possibility of "rough house," and his eyes danced in anticipation.

However, Kearney, with the spirit of fair play uppermost in his mind, again brought down the gavel with a bang. "Why shouldn't the bishop speak?" was his thought. It would be his swan

song, after all—of that he was sure. Therefore, it was good politics to allow the bishop to "say his little say."

"I can see no objection to hearing what the reverend gentleman desires to put before the council. He is a citizen, and all citizens have a right to be heard." A hum of protest was quieted with another bang of the gavel.

"But, Mr. Speaker," cried Councilman Allen, of the Eighth Ward, and one of Dudley's most ardent supporters, "I do object. The reverend gentleman is not a member of this body, and has no right to speak."

"The reverend gentleman has the right of free speech, and so has any other citizen," replied the speaker. "The gentleman from the Eighth Ward is out of order and will please sit down." Bang went the gavel once more.

"But, Mr. Speaker," protested Allen. He got no further.

"The gentleman will take his seat, and this council will be in order and remain so, or I'll call the sergeant-at-arms and instruct him to do his duty. Do I make myself clear?" Silence reigned supreme over the chamber. Looking toward the bishop he continued:

"Now, Bishop Anderson, you may proceed.

Come forward, please, to the secretary's platform, so that all may hear what you have to say." At all hazards the speaker would give the bishop his last chance to be heard.

Bishop Anderson opened the railing gate and walked forward with dignified ease. Bowing to Speaker Kearney, he turned and faced the council and the audience. A breathless silence followed, but the suspense was soon a thing of the past.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE COUNCIL TAKES A VOTE

BISHOP ANDERSON was at no loss for words with which to begin.

"Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and you, gentlemen of the council," said he affably, "for the privilege you have so graciously accorded me, I shall not long trespass upon your time." The bishop's voice was full, round and resonant. Upon this occasion it seemed exactly the same as if he were reading the glorious Litany from his own pulpit and his strong face lighted up as he proceeded. No one could deny this man the right of speech —not even Dudley's iron-clad dozen. Kearney leaned over his desk with his ear turned toward the speaker, that he might not miss a single word.

"As one of the gentlemen has said," continued the bishop, "you have heard from me pretty regularly of late, from every public platform in Presidio. I have, time and again, proclaimed

just where we stand on this franchise question, —there need be no repetition here. I do desire to say, however, that I know I am representing the great mass of people in what I shall tell you this morning. Many of these people have their financial existence jeopardized by the ordinance which is now before your honorable body. You know, each one of you, who is back of the fight against the *American*. You know that *one man* is the brain and brawn of the National, and that he has furnished the sinews with which to put over the National Company franchise. You know his objects—his desires—and his methods of fighting. Long years of experience—some of them bitter ones—have familiarized you with these things. But before you do cast the vote which will mean weal or woe to thousands individually, and honor or dishonor to Presidio as a community, I desire to relate a little incident, which has but lately come to my knowledge."

The bishop paused a second, wiping his lips with his handkerchief, and thus gave Councilman Allen a chance to cry out:

"This isn't a church—we don't want a sermon."

Speaker Kearney raised his gavel, but before he could bring it down the bishop said:

"You may not want a sermon, but some of you need one."

There was an outburst of laughter, and the discomfited Allen lapsed back into sullen silence. The bishop then continued:

"Go with me, if you please—back thirty years, to a little West Virginia town, where peace and plenty reigned supreme. Three miles out was a farm owned by one Charles Alberts, aged at the time about forty years. Alberts was blessed with plenty—so far as the needs of himself and family were concerned. A farmer born, a farmer he would remain until he died. Living on an adjacent farm was a young man, twenty years his junior. This boy, too, was farmer born, but his ambitions turned him citywards. He wanted to go out in the great, big world and fight—a sad mistake made by many farmer boys. But his family was poor—they had no money to spare for the venture. He talked over his hopes and desires with his neighbor, Mr. Alberts, who had no sons of his own—but he did have a daughter, for whom the young man had shown a special fondness. Mr. Alberts thought so much of this bright young fellow that, but for the delicacy of the matter, he would have proposed a gift of a goodly sum as a wedding present.

There was nothing to be done, however, until the matter could be properly arranged—after a proposal in marriage, which he was sure would come to pass. Alas for the joys of the day that never dawns! Alack for the sorrows that come in the black of night!"

"Mr. Speaker!" yelled Councilman Allen, springing to his feet. "Enough of this tale of woe! I move you, sir——"

"Bishop Anderson has the floor," responded Kearney with a cold gleam in his eye and a meaning tone in his voice, whereat the irate Allen sat back into his chair and gazed sheepishly about the chamber.

"One bright spring morning," resumed the bishop in a clear-cut, even tone of voice, "Farmer Alberts awoke to find himself alone in his little home and also a brief note pinned to the chest where he had kept his savings. The signature read: 'Your loving daughter, Bertha.' Then came the confession.

"'Jim and I love each other and we are going away to get married. He was afraid to ask you, for you knew he had nothing. But I love him and believe he is going to be a big man some day. I told him I had enough to pay our way to a big

city and keep us a few months, and he finally agreed. I took the money from your chest, a thousand dollars exactly. Jim doesn't know this, but in time I'll tell him, and I know he is the kind of a man who will pay it back with interest. Don't look for us. We are both tired of farms. We belong in the big world outside. Good-bye, Pa—think of me kindly. Jim will pay you back when I tell him to and that'll be when he has got the money. Forgive me, Pa—and accept my best love.'

"This note is signed 'Bertha,' " continued the bishop soberly, "and for two years no further word came. Mr. Alberts longed for his daughter, and prayed for her return; he did not seek her, as he felt he might handicap her future thereby. As for the money she took from his little hoard he cared nothing, and if it was an act that required forgiveness it long since had been forgiven." The bishop took time to look into the faces of the men before continuing. He found that his words were taking hold, as he hastened on before Councilman Allen took it upon himself to make further protest.

"The rest is soon told," said he impressively. "One day a letter came postmarked Cincinnati.

It was from a firm of attorneys—I have it here as testimony of the truth I am telling you. It reads:

" 'Mr. Jonathan Alberts,
" 'Wheeling, West Virginia.
" 'Dear Sir:
" 'Our client, Mr. J. B. Dudley, desires us to inform you that his wife, your daughter Bertha, died on the night of July 8th and was buried in a local cemetery. A tombstone has been ordered to mark the location and should you at any time desire to visit the grave kindly call at this office for full information. Our client asks us to enclose the sealed envelope you will find herein addressed to yourself.' "

At this point the bishop proceeded to unfold the enclosure, and as he did so absolute quiet prevailed in the council chamber.

"This second note," said he, in a much modified tone, "is from Bertha. It was evidently written only a few hours before her death. It reads:

" 'Dear, dear Father:
" 'I am dying—the end is near. My baby died yesterday a few minutes after its birth. Forgive me, Father, for the worry I have given you. Jim

has been good to me and last night, for the first time, I told him about my taking your money. I told him I wrote you that he would repay every cent in time, and Jim says he will do it, right away. He is doing well here, but he says the West is calling him. Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye forever. "'BERTHA.'"

"Mr. Speaker," shouted Allen, springing to his feet. "I rise to a point of order. What's all this rigmarole got to——"

"The gentleman from the Eighth Ward will please sit down. Enough has been said to make desirable the relating of all Bishop Anderson has to say. Time enough then to act in accordance with the will of this body." Again the gavel descended amid the clapping and cheering of citizens seated in the rear and in the gallery. Meanwhile, Kearney beckoned a *Banner* reporter to his side and whispered:

"'Phone Dudley he'd better get over here quick."

The bishop resumed:

"This matter has a great deal to do with the franchise question, my friends—more, perhaps, than you think. Let us pass over the twenty-eight years since the death of Bertha. Alberts

grew old and helpless; sickness came; his second daughter died, and a little later his faithful wife joined the great, silent majority. Her last illness was very expensive and there had been a succession of bad crops. The Alberts farm was mortgaged. Everything seemed to go against this honest son of toil. The mortgage was coming due and Alberts was at his wits' end. Finally he remembered the thousand dollars that his eldest daughter had taken and turned over to her husband years before. Alberts never had expected to demand payment, but now, in his hour of dire need, surely the boy whom his money had befriended and put in the way of fortune, would come to his assistance. Anyway, he still had the note from his dying daughter—mute evidence of the obligation, and since then the man who had benefitted by the money had grown very rich. In his crude, country way Alberts wrote and told of his trouble, reminding the rich man of his obligation, and giving him the credit of having overlooked it. Would he please pay now? Anxiously this poverty-stricken old man waited and watched and hoped—and prayed. What answer did he receive? Absolute silence! Then, taking his daughter's deathbed note from an old, cowhide trunk, he gave it unto a firm of lawyers.

Not until then did the rich man answer and then only to say that the facts as stated were in the main true—*that the account was over twenty years old and payment had never been demanded, as required by law. Therefore, it was now outlawed, and never would be paid.* Gentlemen, can you picture the misery of Alberts when his farm was sold under the mortgage? Imagine him as he went his lonely way, with faltering steps, to the county poor-farm—an object of charity."

There was almost the stillness of death over the council chamber, as the bishop, in simple words, told this powerful story. But the irrepressible Allen could not get through *his* head just what the bishop was driving at. He cried:

"But, Mr. Speaker, once more I ask what this touchingly pitiful story has got to do with the franchise? I move a vote." Several of the rock-ribbed dozen echoed his wish, but the bishop was not quite through.

"Wait! Just a moment, please," the door at the rear of the council chamber opened, and in came Captain Anderson, leading his charge—an aged man with stumbling steps, his gnarled hands grasping an old hickory cane, himself upheld on one side by the strong grip of Jack Anderson. This woe-begone wreck of what had once been a

happy, prosperous man now shambled forward to the railing, and stood there, palsied from his effort.

"Gentlemen," cried the bishop, "there stands Bertha Alberts' father." Instantly, every eye was turned on the man. The audience gasped; men started forward as if to assist the old man who seemed so helpless. Even the councilmen were visibly affected. Pausing a moment to allow the terrible picture to sink in, the bishop continued:

"The other man, gentlemen, the boy who, to all intents and purposes, borrowed one thousand dollars from Alberts, and who has now grown rich and powerful, the man who refused to repay the one thousand dollars on account of the shallow fiction of law which protected him, that man is James Burchard Dudley, the power behind the National Gas Company—*nay, he is the National Company,* and expects to swallow the American, hide, tail and tallow."

Allen was instantly on his feet. As "Dudley's man," it was his duty to defend his chief from the floor of the council on all occasions. It was plain that even he was becoming fearful of the effect of the bishop's story. With biting sarcasm, he sneered:

"Mr. Speaker, are we expected to believe this cock-and-bull story? Where is the proof? Send for Honorable James Burchard Dudley and let him confront this bishop," whereat Speaker Kearney quietly replied: "I *have* sent for him. I expect him momentarily."

"The dozen" looked to Kearney for their orders. A glance of the eye would tell them what to do, but he avoided their gaze.

"I am glad you did send for Mr. Dudley, Mr. Speaker. I want to confront him," remarked the bishop quietly. "You want proofs? Well, you shall have them. There is Alberts, here is the letter from the Cincinnati lawyers, his dying daughter's last words telling of Dudley's promise to pay—and here," the bishop's voice arose to a high pitch—"here is Alberts' pitiful letter and the one the lawyers wrote—Dudley's answer!" Turning to the speaker's desk, he tossed the papers in front of Kearney.

"*You* know that signature, Mr. Kearney?"

Fascinated, Kearney gazed at the documents. He saw—he knew.

"Yes," he said, "but where did you get them?"

The bishop smiled and replied: "I merely used Dudley's own methods, Mr. Kearney. There are the indisputable proofs. Now, gentlemen,

just a few more words and I am done. Dudley's greed and selfish spirit condemned this man Alberts to the poor-house. Will you allow that same grasping greed to make paupers of numberless citizens of Presidio—men, women and children—of your own fair city? You will vote as your conscience dictates, but remember, some day you will stand before your God and be required to make answer to the terrible question—'What hast thou done with thy talents?' I thank you, gentlemen, for your indulgence." The bishop's case was in. There was nothing to do now but await events, so he took the empty seat between his mother and his wife. Meanwhile, Jack Anderson assisted the aged Mr. Alberts to a seat near the door. Mother Anderson patted the bishop's hand affectionately; Rabbi Wise, Dr. Arnold, and Father Leahy quietly congratulated him; but Flanagan leaned over and in a loud voice said:

"Fine, Bishop! Wonderful! But do you think it will change any of them?"

"No, Flanagan, I don't—not any of the dozen! But that man in the speaker's chair—Kearney—he's the one I am counting on. In a few moments we shall know."

The vote was loudly called for by the Dudleyites; Speaker Kearney looked up hesitatingly.

"If there are no further remarks the clerk will call the roll. The question is: 'Shall the ordinance pass?' Members will vote yes or no," after which he placed his elbows on the desk, and, resting his head in his hands, listened while the singsong voice of the clerk called forth the names. When Caton's name was called, that member arose in his place and said, "Mr. Speaker, I——" Right here he heard a peculiar cough, and, turning around, he saw Raymond and Captain Anderson half standing.

"Mr. Speaker, I vote—no."

A sigh of relief went up from Flanagan. Caton had stood "hitched."

Finally the roll call was complete. Flanagan had been keeping tab, and, handing it to the bishop, said:

"There you are, Bishop—twelve—twelve."

"Wait," replied the bishop, not looking at the paper. His eyes were upon the bowed head of the speaker.

"Twelve *for,* and twelve *against,* Mr. Speaker —a tie vote," whispered the clerk, and then all eyes were turned on Kearney. His was to be the deciding voice. There was very little hope in the breasts of many in that audience. Kearney had been known to them for years, and every

time he voted he had done Dudley's bidding. He would do it now. There were many dubious hearts beating with sickening dread, as Patrick J. Kearney raised his eyes and gazed about him. He was face to face with the crisis of his life, and how would he meet it? Wherever he looked he could feel Bishop Anderson's gaze glued upon him. Slowly the speaker arose and in a calm, even voice, though tempered with emotion, he said:

"Gentlemen, under the charter of the city of Presidio, in case of a tie vote upon any question, the speaker casts the deciding vote. Only upon very rare occasions has this been necessary. But to-day it is." . . . Here he paused, as if to collect himself, then continued: "Before casting my vote, however, I desire to make a few remarks and I want them to be taken in shorthand and appear in the record." Another slight pause.

"Gentlemen, for many years you have known me as Jim Dudley's right-hand man, and my loyalty to him never has been questioned. But there is something we must exact of men upon whom we lavish our loyalties—something which must appeal to our finer natures—gratitude! And the lack of it in any one's makeup must cause a real man's blood to boil with indignation—especially

that of an Irishman. Bishop Anderson has produced proof which cannot be doubted, and, as I gaze at Alberts, I cannot bring myself to do a thing which will create many paupers of his kind here in Presidio. In the last analysis I cannot allow myself to further serve the thoroughly selfish purposes of an already *too rich* man. Right here I throw off Dudley's collar. Gentlemen, *I vote no!*" Kearney was through, and the last bang of his gavel broke off its handle.

For a moment the audience sat stunned, and then the realization of what Kearney had done burst upon them. Their savings of a lifetime had been saved! Hurrah everybody! Then broke forth a delirious storm of joyful yells—strong men trembled with excitement and women cried with the maddened intoxication of victory. Flanagan couldn't speak—so great was his emotion.

The gavelless speaker secured order. Then came a queer scene inside the railing. The leader of the gang had quit, and the gang was ready to flop with him. It is always so in such cases—the king was dead—long live the king—*the people!*

There was one continuous yell of triumph as some of the councilmen jumped to their feet and cried: "Mr. Speaker, I desire to change my vote

to 'No.'" They were preparing for the next campaign!—and they would lose no time. The rout was complete. When order was restored, the excited clerk announced:

"Six votes for the ordinance, nineteen against." Only Allen and five of the original dozen stood by their sinking ship. Survive or perish they would stick to Dudley. But there was gall and wormwood yet to swallow. The victory needs must be scotched against further attack. A new ordinance granting the American a franchise renewal for a period of fifty years was introduced and rushed through on a *viva voce* vote. Then, with a wild whoop, the council adjourned, and, by way of approval, the bishop was seized and slapped on the back until the women folk came to his rescue. He was, indeed, the people's leader—he had served them! The exuberance of their joy knew no bounds. There were two hundred and fifty in the audience and twice as many outside who became quickly apprised of the news. The City Hall rang with cheers, shouts, and songs of praise.

Mother Anderson was beside herself with joy. She became separated from her son, and, moving hither and thither, she finally succeeded in arriving at his side.

"Here, you crazy men," she cried, "get out of the way—that's *my* son, please don't hug him to death;" then, throwing her arms around his neck she joyously exclaimed: "My boy, my boy—I knew you'd do it—I knew it! I knew it!"

"Jack did the work, Mother—good old Jack. Where is he?" asked the bishop anxiously. The captain was outside busy with Raymond in trying to protect Alberts from the mob who wanted to do something for him.

Slowly the crowd was filing out when Kearney came down from his desk and advanced to the rail. The bishop saw him coming, and, with outstretched hands, cried:

"Kearney, Kearney, I thank you! Your conscience wasn't dead, was it?"

"I dunno what you'd call it, Bishop, but while you were speaking, something down under my fourth rib on the left side began pounding, and when you were through it was hitting pretty hard —that's all."

Just then there was a commotion in the hall, and Dudley burst into the room like a cyclone eyes blazing. He had heard the news outside, but couldn't believe it.

"What's all this fuss about, Kearney? You sent for me?"

Kearney eyed him from head to foot. There was contempt in his glance.

"Yes, I did. Your ordinance has been defeated, and for the first time you've been licked. You set a trap—and I shoved you in it. That's all, Dudley."

"You mean——"

"I mean I voted against you—and I'm glad of it!"

Dudley stood dumbfounded. He wouldn't have been surprised to learn that some one else had flopped—but Kearney! Kearney!—he couldn't realize it! When he did, he glared for a moment, and then, fairly frothing at the mouth with rage, snarled out:

"Y-o-u i-n-f-e-r-n-a-l traitor—you!"

Bishop Anderson had advanced with outstretched hand, but Dudley disdained it. Turning on his heel, he started for the door. Captain Anderson interrupted him.

"Just one moment, please, Mr. Dudley! I want you to greet an old friend of yours—Mr. Charles Alberts, of Wheeling, West Virginia."

Dudley paused, and, with wide, staring eyes, gazed at the wretched man. He saw—he recognized him and cried:

"Alberts!"

With that he went out into the noonday sunlight.

He was a beaten man—and he knew it.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE REVOLT OF A SECRETARY

WITHIN thirty minutes half of the city had heard the news. From mouth to mouth it flew with the amazing rapidity of a prairie fire. Men discussed it at luncheon; in their offices, and at their clubs.

Dudley was beaten!

Extras of *The Tribune* and *The Scimitar* appeared on the streets; copies were eagerly bought up, and the newsboys reaped a harvest. A great battle had been fought for the rights of the commoner. The people had won, and this fight was led by a bishop—a preacher—a churchman!

The Tribune then and there nominated Bishop Anderson to be next mayor. *The Scimitar* went its contemporary one better and gave him the title of "governor," and even hinted in time that it might be president; all of which was simply the

froth of enthusiasm, because the bishop was a churchman and churchman he would remain to the end of his days.

There was plenty of opportunity for fighting men in the church. The bishop realized a great victory had been won, and he knew the part he had played in it. He also knew that but for the splendid assistance of his brilliant, militant brother, Captain Anderson, the fight would have been hopelessly lost. Jack Anderson had unearthed Caton's past and caused him to vote against the ordinance. So, too, had the captain dug up the Alberts' case, and run it down to a successful conclusion. He had prepared the ammunition and the bishop had fired the charge, and Captain Anderson had used up his own time in the fight and spent money freely simply because —as the bishop now remembered—"he wanted a certain young woman to have a chance to defend herself." Well, the boy should have his wish. The bishop promised himself that, and he would keep his word, if Jack still held out for it.

In his heart Bishop Anderson hoped the exciting events of the past summer had effaced the girl from his brother's mind. She had never been mentioned; in fact, he didn't even know her name,

but that night after dinner he would hear Jack's story. He was to hear it sooner than that, as the fates decided.

Kearney requested the bishop to allow him to care for Alberts until some disposition could be made of his case. Certain it was Alberts never would be allowed to return to the poor-farm. Gladly did the bishop accede to the Irishman's request, and then the bishop, his wife, Jack and the little mother went to luncheon in a fashionable café. Eating was difficult, because every one wanted a word with the *fighting bishop*. Mother Anderson and the bishop's wife were also the recipients of many congratulations, but Captain Anderson kept in the background as much as possible—such was his modesty. Then, too, he was thinking of a certain girl that he was to defend before the bishop. "Forget her!" There never had been a moment all through the fight that he hadn't thought of her. *He was fighting for her alone,* and now his chance had come. The bishop *must* be convinced.

After luncheon Helen Anderson said she had some shopping to do, and the little mother volunteered to join her, which left the brothers alone together.

"Jack," said the bishop when the ladies had

departed, "I'm going over to Dudley's office. Want to go along?"

"Dudley's office! For the love of Pete! Why, Doc——"

"Well, I said we'd beat him—we have! I also said I'd win him over, and I'm going to make the attempt to-day."

A queer look came into Captain Anderson's face. A smile played around his lips. In amazement he gazed at his brother for a long moment before replying.

"No, Doc, I won't go over there now, but I may run in while you are there. You know my time is almost up and I shall soon have to return to work in Chicago. I have a little private business to attend to first."

There was a subtle something in the captain's manner, which made the bishop wonder. Perhaps he caught the quizzical smile playing around the corner of his brother's lips, but he gave it up, and the two separated.

When Dudley left the council chamber he was in a perfect blaze of wrath—likewise dazed. He couldn't realize he had been defeated. Why, only last night—nay, this morning—he and Kearney had agreed that the situation was a

cinch. He couldn't lose. But he had lost—and Kearney!—were his wits deserting him? No, Kearney had told him to his own face that he had voted against him. Then, as he left the council chamber, that ex-army captain had confronted him with Alberts. He remembered it all now—he was beaten! beaten! beaten!

"Drive me any place out of the city for an hour," he cried to his waiting chauffeur, as he bounced into his big car.

"Where?" asked the man.

"I don't care where; only drive fast!"

The chauffeur did as he was directed, and the long, white, ribbon-like strip of road slipped under the smooth-running car as it flew along. In the back seat Dudley tried to collect himself and figure on his next move. The franchise, so far as he was concerned, was irretrievably lost. That he knew, and the two men who had beaten him, the bishop and Kearney, they were impregnable—that he also knew. He couldn't attack them. Like a flash there came into his mind the question of how the Alberts' story had "leaked." Who had furnished the data for that? Who had tricked him? That, he must find out. While the bishop could not be attacked directly, he could be indirectly—through his brother. Dudley's

lips closed into a grim, straight line—he clenched his fat hands convulsively and snapped out to the chauffeur:

"Back to the office!" His mind was made up. He would strike swift, and sure.

Meanwhile, at work at her desk, Mary Sherman, secretary to "Big Chief" Dudley, was doing some very hard thinking on her own account. The cries of the newsboys apprised her of the fact that Dudley had been defeated, and Kearney had come in and told her of the council meeting. The young woman was much interested; indeed, she missed not a word of Kearney's brief recital, but her heart was sore afraid, for she knew Dudley would suspect every one in the office of treachery. What the result would be she hardly dared to think, but the situation must be met and she decided to meet it bravely. She expressed surprise when Kearney informed her his vote had been the final blow to Dudley's cause.

"I beat him," he said, "and I am glad of it! For the first time in years, Miss Sherman, my conscience is clear. And now I am going out in the plant, pick up a few of my traps and get ready to leave."

"You are going to quit Mr. Dudley's service?"

"Quit! humph! There won't be any chance of

quitting. Technically, I'm as good as fired already, and right now Jim Dudley is planning how he can pulverize me. But I am coming back in here before I go and have it out with him."

Kearney started to leave the room, but as he reached the door he turned and said:

"Miss Sherman, I wonder where Captain Anderson got all his information?" He looked at the girl narrowly and smiled, as he saw his shot had struck home. Mary Sherman was confused, her color came and went from red to white.

"Why, Mr. Kearney, I am"—she stammered; "I don't——"

But Kearney didn't allow her to finish.

"Sure, *you* don't. I was just wondering," and, shaking his head, he smilingly went his way.

A second later, Dennis, the ubiquitous office boy, came in. He, too, was all excitement, and, with dancing eyes, he cried:

"Miss Sherman, where is the chief?"

"You mean Mr. Dudley? I don't know. I'm expecting him back every minute. Why?"

"Collins, of the city room, wants to know. Things are in an awful shape out there. No one seems to know what to do. All they can do is to sit and mutter, 'The Big Chief's licked.' "

"Is *The Banner* going to get out an extra this afternoon, Dennis?"

"Extra, nothin'. *The Banner* will do well to get out its regular edition to-morrow morning—let alone any extras. They are all noddle-pated out there, I tell you."

Just at this moment Dudley burst into the office. Dennis tried to get out of his way, but failed, and his employer's rush all but knocked him over. The boy was completely at a loss for words, and all he could say was "Gee!" as he scampered out of the room.

Dudley tossed his cap and coat on a chair near the hat rack, and then, with hands behind him, paced up and down the office, muttering between his clenched teeth:

"Beaten, by the great horn spoon I'm beaten! and by a preacher, too!"

His secretary stood by the window waiting for Dudley to subside. He apparently did not see her, but when she softly called out, "Mr. Dudley," he stopped and looked at her with lowering eyes. Just then came the cries of newsboys outside: "Extra, *Tribune!* All about Dudley's defeat." Even the little news merchants had an exultant ring in their voices, as they proclaimed the downfall of "the big boss."

"Close those windows," he snarled, going to his desk. The secretary did as she was told and waited. Dudley seemed lost in thought, and finally the girl asked:

"Do you need me now, Mr. Dudley?"

Again that narrow look.

"Yes, sit down!"

It was not a request, but a peremptory command.

Tremblingly the girl obeyed, and waited for the blow, which she was sure was to follow.

For a moment not a word was spoken—Dudley looking—the girl waiting. There was an unusual hardness in his voice, as he finally said:

"Miss Sherman, do you know I have lost my first fight?"

"Yes, I heard the newsboys crying it!"

Again a pause as if carefully weighing the words she knew he was about to fire at her. Slowly he said:

"My defeat was caused by some one in my confidence. I have been betrayed. Some one in this office has been keeping Bishop Anderson informed, and to-day or some day, that *some one* has taken papers out of my private files and given them to my enemies. *And now I must know who that some one is.*"

Mary Sherman felt faint. The blow was coming—she could feel it—so, closing her eyes, she waited for it to fall. Never for one second did the editor take his eyes off of the girl. He leaned across his desk, pointed a threatening finger, and said:

"Yes, *I know*. Only three people have access to this desk and by a process of elimination it was easy to see it was not I"—a pause, a deadly one to the girl—*"it was not you*—it was *Kearney!*—*Kearney* the traitor!"—and the enraged editor brought his fist down with a bang.

Mary Sherman opened her eyes in amazement. The expected blow had not fallen and a grateful sigh went up from her heart. She was too bewildered to make any reply save to exclaim:

"Mr. Kearney!"

"Yes, Kearney," shot back the irate editor. "He has as good as confessed it. Told me to my face in the council room that the franchise had been defeated and that he did it. *There's* guilt for you!"

There was almost a ring of triumph in Dudley's voice, as he gave utterance to his charge. It was Kearney he suspected. Nay, *he knew* it was Kearney, and, for a moment, Mary Sherman felt that the floor was giving way beneath her.

"No, Mr. Dudley, what Mr. Kearney said was not indicative of guilt. You are judging only on circumstantial evidence, and sometimes—nay, many times that is wrong."

"But not in this case, Miss Sherman. Oh, the bishop can gloat to-day, but to-morrow—just wait until to-morrow. I've got him! I've got him!"

Once more the editor was pacing the room and speaking between gritting teeth.

"Who?—the bishop?" asked the girl.

"Well, the next thing to it. His brother, that ex-army captain. I've got the goods on him."

A dread fear seized the girl's heart. The blow she had expected a moment before was now coming—only in a more direct way.

"What do you mean, Mr. Dudley?" she asked. Her backbone stiffened; her heart beat faster as she looked towards the editor.

Without looking at her the chief went to the safe in the wall, and, while working the combination, said:

"His connection with that Carew woman. I've got all the facts in the case; the record of the divorce—everything!—and here they are." He turned with the papers in his hands and sat down at his desk. "I haven't trusted even Kearney or

you with them. Hensen sent them to me—direct —*and now I can use them.*"

Instantly all timidity left Mary Sherman's heart. She was in thorough command of herself now, and ready to fight as only a woman can fight, but she determined to give this editor a chance to play the man. If he did not do that—then she would play *her* card.

"Use them, Mr. Dudley?" she asked. "For what purpose? To satisfy a personal grudge against the man who has beaten you? Have you no charity?"

"Charity? For whom?" sneered Dudley.

"For that Carew woman, perhaps."

"Why for her? She is guilty! There was evidence enough against her to convince the court."

"Circumstantially, perhaps, yes. But there may have been other facts not revealed at the trial; facts a court will not allow to be brought out."

"What! are you defending this woman?" interrogated Dudley, with a show of astonishment.

"No," she softly said, "I'm not defending the woman. Probably she has been terribly punished, if she has sinned. Perhaps, now, she is off in some corner of this little world working hard

to make a living and striving for happiness. *The Banner* has a wide circulation, Mr. Dudley. That story might reach the girl and her employers and ruin her chances. You know the world does not forgive women—it does forgive men."

CHAPTER XXVIII

PELHAM VS. PELHAM

HERE was more opposition for Dudley. This girl—his secretary—an employee, standing before him pleading for a woman without a character—a woman who had been held up to scorn in a court of law. Ordinarily, he would have dismissed such opposition by a wave of the hand and gone on about his work, but something within him—a shred of remaining conscience, perhaps, bade him reason with her, to show how untenable was her position. And, anyway, his newspaper was not run on sentiment. This was in the day's work, so he tersely said:

"Miss Sherman, this Carew woman is a means to an end, and I am going to use her."

Poor Mary Sherman. Quickly she made up her mind that he *should not* use this "Carew woman" until she had exhausted every effort to

stop him, and if worst came to worst—well, then, she——

"Oh, Mr. Dudley," cried the girl, "don't you love any one save yourself? Is your heart so completely encysted with venom and hate? Suppose you had a daughter."

This shot struck home.

"Suppose I had a daughter," repeated Dudley, his voice vibrant with the softness which only comes from a tender heart—and now his heart *was* tender. His glance stole over to the glass paper weight on his desk, a tenderness came into his eyes as he gazed at the childlike face shining there.

"I did have a daughter once," he said gently, as he shoved the picture to his secretary, who looked and nodded her head.

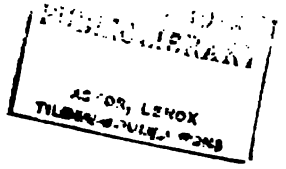
"That is her picture," said the editor. "She was fair, sweet, and winsome to look upon. But," and here there was a catch in his voice; it trembled as he continued, "at four she died, and something within me died with her."

He did not tell her of the babe that had died at birth, nor of the mother who followed on before the close of another day—for lack of proper nourishment and care. He did not tell her of his second marriage to a woman of refinement for



"*Suppose I had a daughter*," repeated Dudley—a tenderness came into his eyes as he gazed at the *child*-like face in the paper-weight




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whom he had built the great castle on the hill—nor of the beautiful child she had borne him. Nor did he speak of the death of the child's mother, which came as a final blow to his chance for happiness on this earth. He simply paused a few moments and buried his face in his hand.

"Do you know, Miss Sherman," said he finally, "since you've been here I've often thought *my* Mary would have looked like you by now. Others, too, have remarked it. She would have been twenty-three now."

A great big hope sprang up in Mary Sherman's heart. A man who could have such tender memories of his dead child surely would not be so cruel as to condemn a woman without hearing—and only for revenge. She knew his mind was sore over his defeat, but he would recover from that.

"And twenty-three is just my age, Mr. Dudley."

Then came that recovery so certain in men of Dudley's calibre. A revulsion, as it were. What was he doing? Mooning? Getting sentimental? That would never do. The fighting man regained mastery over the tender father and he curtly said:

"But that's nothing to do with this case, Miss

Sherman. That story goes in to-morrow morning's *Banner!*"

Again the cold fear gripped her heart. Holding out one slender hand she said:

"But, Mr. Dudley—please——"

Right here the editor determined for once and all to convince this girl she was wrong and her efforts futile.

"Here, Miss Sherman, is a certified copy of that woman's divorce case." Opening the record, all bound in ribbons and seals, he read:

"Pelham vs. Pelham. Now listen to some of this testimony."

Rapidly turning over the sheets to the place he desired, he paused, and, adjusting his glasses, continued reading:

"Questions to the woman's husband:

"Q. 'Did you on June 16th, visit the Hotel Gilmore?'

"A. 'I did.'

"Q. 'Please state to the court exactly what transpired there.'

"A. 'I had received information my wife was at that hotel with another man. I went there about nine-thirty in the evening, and, examining the register, found thereon the name of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Cullen assigned to room 613. Cul-

len was the man I had suspected. Taking two witnesses with me I went to room 613 and knocked on the door, but received no answer. Waiting a moment I knocked again and there stood Cullen. The room was in a state of disorder, and, standing by the window was my wife. Cullen was much agitated. I was shocked beyond measure, upbraided her and threatened to shoot Cullen, but my witnesses interfered and took me away. That was all.' "

During the reading of the record Mary stood as if transfixed with horror, much like the timid hare before the gleaming eyes of a fox-hound.

Dudley continued:

"That evidence was corroborated by two reputable witnesses and the divorce granted. Isn't that enough for you? And"—reaching out, he touched a button, "and that's the woman Captain Anderson wants to marry."

"Enough? My God!" gasped the young woman. The whole building seemed to be falling about her.

Without waiting to see the effect of his dramatic recital, Dudley further said:

"The story is all prepared and in type, and it

goes in on the front page of to-morrow morning's *Banner.*"

Responding to the summons, Dennis came in and Dudley handed him the prepared article along with the papers in the case, and said:

"Take these to the city editor." Then, rubbing his hands, as if in great glee over his prospective revenge, he concluded:

"There it is, Miss Sherman, full and complete, and it does not contravene the libel law."

According to his belief Editor Dudley had convinced this girl of the justness of his position, the righteousness of his attitude; anyway, he was "within the law"—so what should *he* care? To-morrow Bishop Anderson's proud family name would be exposed, pilloried by public scandal—thus, in a measure, Dudley would be avenged for his defeat in the council chamber. He had lost millions to which he had not a shadow of right, but his personal vanity, his egotism would be restored by this muddy attack on Captain Anderson, who, seemingly, had been mixed up with a guilty woman.

Swiftly and surely Mary Sherman divined that which was in Dudley's mind. She well knew that nothing would stop him—nothing short of a cataclysm, something terrible in its consequences.

But what could she do—a defenseless girl? Almost beside herself she cried:

"That's just it with you men. It's always the law. So long as you stay within that, it makes no difference how many hearts you break, or homes you wreck. Just *law, law, law!*"

There was a strong temerity in her voice, a ring of defiance—and Dudley was about to end the interview, when, hearing a commotion at the door, he looked up, and there stood Bishop Anderson, unannounced, and seemingly quite calm and collected. Mary Sherman also saw with consternation the bishop's presence. There was a faint suspicion of a look of triumph on the bishop's face, which, under the circumstances, might be pardoned. We are all conscious of triumph when a hard-earned victory has been won. So far as Dudley was concerned the interview would be of very short duration.

"Well, what's the meaning of this intrusion?" he almost snarled—"what do you want now? Aren't you satisfied?"

Bishop Anderson slowly advanced, and Mary Sherman retired to a position near the mantelpiece. She felt that she ought to leave the room, but something within determined her to remain. There was still a chance that she might influence

Dudley further. In his anger Dudley forgot her presence and the bishop merely bowed, and, holding out his hand to Dudley, said:

"I want what I have always wanted, Mr. Dudley—*peace.* I want to be friends with you."

The editor ignored the outstretched hand, and scornfully replied:

"Friends with *you,* Bishop Anderson! The one man who in all my life has ever beaten me! You tricked me . . . you tricked me! But I have one card yet to play."

Bishop Anderson had expected some such outburst of passion. It was but natural. However, he would be careful not to give way to a similar feeling.

"No, I didn't trick you. I merely fought fire with fire—that is all. I told you in the beginning you would lose, and you did. I now come to extend the olive branch."

There was no exultant ring in the bishop's voice, as he delivered his message. On the contrary, it was earnest and conciliatory, but it did not appeal to the editor.

"Rot!" he exclaimed, "there can be no peace between you and me. I'll admit my defeat on the franchise, but——" and here his voice became metallic, "you read to-morrow morning's *Ban-*

ner. Just read it!" A thrust like this was not totally unexpected. The bishop smiled, and stood up proudly.

"A personal attack on me, I presume?"

Dudley had intended his attack on Captain Anderson to be a surprise to the bishop, but here was a chance to give it to him now. It would give the bishop something to worry about pending the detailed story in the morning *Banner.*

"No, not you, Bishop Anderson. I can't attack you personally. I have had you looked up and you are one of the few public men who could stand such a search. I'll give you credit for that —but," he continued, narrowly watching his uninvited guest to see the effect of his words:

"But, there is a member of your family *who is not immune,"* and Dudley sat back serenely and scanned the bishop's face.

Into Bishop Anderson's mind there came the first faint suspicion of doubt. His own family was above reproach—but his brother, Captain Anderson! Did the editor have a story concerning him? Coolly, he replied, "I suppose you mean my brother?"

Dudley's first shot had told; he would follow up his seeming advantage.

"Yes, *your brother.* I've got his record, too, and it's somewhat shady."

Bishop Anderson's mind worked very rapidly. In a way he knew of his brother's life from his birth to now. There was nothing radically wrong with this record else the army would not have retained him. The army is jealous of the private character of its officers, but newspapers have a way of finding a shred and building a cable. Maybe Jack had been guilty of some boyish indiscretion and this editor had found it out. Perhaps it was Jack's divorce, and, while that was unpleasant, there was nothing wrong in it. The bishop leaned slightly forward:

"You mean his unfortunate divorce. That was regular and lawful. Mr. Dudley, I'd advise you to go slow with Captain Anderson."

The bishop knew any unwarranted attack on his brother would cause Mr. Dudley trouble—physically, to say the least. The bishop was playing for time, but Dudley wouldn't wait. While the iron was hot he would strike again.

"No, not his divorce," he replied, "but *the woman's divorce he now wants to marry.*"

This blow struck the bishop squarely. How did Dudley know that? Jack had told him no one knew it. Did the long arm of newsgathering

pry into every nook and cranny? Mary Sherman, from her place near the mantelpiece, stood pale and panting, drinking in every word. Where would this conflict end? Both men had forgotten her very existence, and she was not sorry. By all means, she should be there. She would stay at all hazards.

Recovering himself, Bishop Anderson leaned forward and said:

"Do you know that?"

Was the bishop again acting a part? Dudley looked at him and sneered.

"Sure I know it,—don't you?"

"*No, I don't,*" replied the bishop, "but I expected to learn of it to-night."

Here was a chance for a master stroke for Dudley. Taking the court record from his desk, he literally flung it at the bishop with:

"Well, learn it now. Read that court record, especially the husband's testimony on page twenty-six, and see what a fine specimen of womanhood your distinguished ex-army brother wants to marry."

Wonderingly, the bishop turned to the page designated and read the words, which burned and seared themselves into his brain. What a precious fool his brother had been to mix himself up

with such a woman! The bishop was cornered—he must make terms, any kind of terms of peace with the editor. His victory over Dudley in the franchise fight was forgotten. He must sue for peace, to protect himself, Helen, Jack, and the unsuspecting little mother. Surely Mr. Dudley would be amenable to reason.

"But you won't publish such a story," he cried; "this is horrible!"

"Won't I?" replied Dudley. "It's news."

Right here Mary Sherman realized the time for her to act had arrived, and, quietly approaching Dudley's desk, she asked:

"May I say a word, please?"

CHAPTER XXIX

MARY SHERMAN TELLS HER STORY

So absorbed had been the editor and the bishop in their conflict that they had forgotten the presence of this slender girl who now stood before them. But Dudley would brook no interference. His voice, when he spoke, was a peremptory command:

"Miss Sherman, leave the room!"

"But, Mr. Dudley," pleaded the girl.

"You are my secretary, Miss Sherman, and this does not concern you."

Prompt action was necessary, and, looking at her employer with unwavering eyes, she replied in an even, modulated voice:

"Yes, Mr. Dudley, it does concern me more than you think."

Dudley was thoroughly angry. How could any such story concern his secretary?

"Miss Sherman——"

Raising one slender hand and closing her eyes, as if to shut out the blow which she knew was about to come, the young woman quietly said: "Mr. Dudley, and you, Bishop Anderson—*I am the woman* in that divorce case.

Profound silence followed this statement, interrupted only by the hard breathing of two men, as they sensed this confession and realized its full import. The bishop could not believe his ears.

"Who are you?" he cried.

Dudley was much too dumbfounded to speak for a moment. He had liked this girl—and now——! His thoughts were interrupted by the girl's voice saying:

"I am Mrs. Pelham—my maiden name is Phyllis Carew. I am the woman, Mr. Dudley, you propose excoriating in your paper to-morrow morning. I, Bishop Anderson, am the woman your brother wants to marry."

The cleric was beside himself with enraged emotion when he realized that at last he was face to face with the woman in the case.

"Marry you!" he cried. "You can't mean it. And you would have him do this and thus ruin his life—disgrace his name—and that of his family!"

There was a certain tone in Mary Sherman's

voice, as she replied, that made the bishop pause. She said:

"Stop, sir! Stop right now, Bishop Anderson! You have no right to say that! You do not know the facts. Are you to judge me unheard?"

"I know what Captain Anderson has told me. *I also know what this record says,*" and he held out the document towards the sorely tried girl. Dudley leaned back in his chair and watched, with glee, the bishop's discomfiture; he would bide his time. His secretary did not seem to notice the record, as she replied:

"Yes, but you do not know what that record *does not show.*"

"What do you mean?" cried the editor. Now was the time for Mary Sherman to tell all—everything, *and the whole truth.*

"That I was inveigled into that hotel—room 613; that I walked into a trap that was set for me by my legal husband. I——"

The bishop in his church work had in his day dealt with many erring women, and he knew that their tendency when confronted was to deny.

"A likely story," said he, with a semblance of a sneer.

"Where's your proof of this?" asked Dudley. Truly, Mary Sherman was on the rack.

"I haven't any now. Nothing *save my word.*"

Then the bishop asked:

"Why didn't you defend yourself in court?"

Taking a step forward until she confronted both men, she spoke sharply:

"Defend myself! Would any judge have believed me any more than you two do right now? What chance had I against my husband's statements, the hotel register *and two witnesses,* who were telling the truth, *as they saw it.* Witnesses for such purposes are cheap in any large city. You both know that."

There was an air of bitterness in her voice, and she paused for a moment as if to collect herself.

"What do you know about my unhappy childhood?" she continued—"father and mother both dying when I was a babe and I being brought up by a maiden aunt? What do you know about my meeting Pelham, a fascinating, good-looking man, and eloping with him when I was but sixteen? What do you know about his tiring of me and wanting to divorce me? He gave me grounds—a plenty, but I refused to take action. *My* church—*your* church, Bishop Anderson—*your church, I say, forbade that*—and I am a churchwoman. What do you know of my feel-

ings when at seventeen I became a mother only to have my husband sneeringly say, 'he doubted whether he was the father of that brat?' "

The young woman covered her face, as if to shut out the awful picture, and her voice became hard, as she continued:

"I wish I could have killed him!" said she bitterly. Then her voice softened to almost a sob as she said: "Three months later my baby died—died—oh!"

The bishop and the editor listened, but in their hearts they believed the story was only a well-acted fabrication—but she was allowed to continue without interruption.

"After this my husband became more cruel than ever. He drank, beat me—left me alone for days, and when he did come home it was one quarrel after another. Finally, I couldn't stand it any longer and went to my aunt's home in Brooklyn. Three days later came a 'phone message that my husband had suddenly taken ill at the Hotel Gilmore and wanted me to come to him. Once again my churchly duty called upon me and I went—*and was caught like a rat in a trap.* Can I ever forget it? You know what happened! That divorce record shows that. The man Cullen, after my husband deserted me, leav-

ing me with this man, proposed that I take up life with him. I struck him and then swooned. A gentleman and lady who happened to be in the same hotel found me and cared for me. They believed me and furnished me with money for a business education, and I've been a self-respecting, self-sustaining woman ever since, and my soul is clean and it will stay clean."

Almost exhausted, Mary Sherman paused and looked pleadingly at her auditors. Her recital had been dramatic, but Dudley, the flint-hearted, fighting editor was not convinced. Neither was the churchly bishop.

Dudley observed, in what he considered a gentle voice:

"I am sorry for you, young lady, but such statements are not necessarily facts, upon which your innocence can be proved."

"Don't I know it?" cried the girl, and then, holding out her hands in a helpless manner, she said: "Oh, why isn't *he* here?"

"Who?" asked the bishop, almost divining what her answer would be.

"Your brother—Captain Anderson."

How far would this convicted woman carry her effrontery, wondered Dr. Anderson. Now he

became angry, and, for the first time, forgot his churchly calling.

"I am glad he isn't; he might be *foolish enough* to believe you."

The girl made no reply, and, becoming impatient, Dudley arose from his chair.

"You must realize after this your connection with this office must cease," said he. "I cannot retain such a woman in a confidential capacity."

"I expected that, Mr. Dudley. It is in thorough keeping with your generosity. But I *did hope* for at least charity *from a bishop.*"

Bishop Anderson, quite taken aback by this remark, moved uneasily in the chair into which he had fallen.

"I am charitable, Miss—Miss——" he stammered, not knowing what name to address her by.

"Carew, Bishop Anderson—that's *a clean name.*"

"Well, I advise you to keep it, and if I can serve you in any way, why——"

The mockery of his words stung the girl into a fury. She had been dishonored and discredited by both these men. Like an enraged tigress she turned and said:

"You cannot serve me, Bishop Anderson. Your offer is genuine hypocrisy, and it is just

such narrow-minded men as you and Mr. Dudley that *drive* women to the streets. Sin in the form of brightly lighted saloons and dance halls holds out a warm welcome to the downcast. They ask no questions. But your churches—solemn old buildings hidden behind the garb of respectability—demand the pedigree of every woman before she dares to hold her head up within their portals. That's your twentieth century religion."

Bishop Anderson interrupted. "Young lady," he admonished, "you are beside yourself."

"No, I'm not beside myself. I am speaking the truth—*and you know it.*" Pausing for a brief moment as if to collect herself for a final effort, she turned towards the editor and said:

"And to you, Mr. Dudley—I just want to say one word before I go. You have been defeated in your franchise fight, and it wasn't *Bishop Anderson* who beat you; it wasn't *Kearney; it was I.* Do you hear? I did it! I beat you! I furnished all the information to Bishop Anderson, *although he did not know it.* I am the one who unearthed Alberts. *I am the one* who took the papers from your desk. I knew from your correspondence with Hensen you were after me, and I determined if you were going to wreck me and my chance of happiness, I'd pull down one house

around your head before I went. And I did—I did—I, a poor, defenseless woman! I did it—I did it, I tell you! Now I am going, but not to the streets as you would send me. I am clean—I always have been—and I am going to keep that way, and all of the *editors and bishops in the world* cannot make me different."

She stopped, her task was over. She had told her story; the truth she knew it to be, and it was not believed. There was nothing more to do. Both men sat quiet—transfixed—as she slowly turned away from them and started to leave the office. At the doorway she paused a moment, and, looking at Bishop Anderson, quietly said:

"Bishop Anderson, you have called Mr. Dudley a Pharisee. Shake hands with him—you and he are of the same sect."

With that she was gone.

Neither man spoke for a moment. Both were tremendously affected by her recital. Dudley, because he knew he had the bishop by the throat, and Dr. Anderson, because he feared the exposure of his brother's connection with such a woman.

Dudley gloated. "And now, Bishop Anderson, how will you feel when this story comes out to-morrow?"

"Mr. Dudley, won't you wait until I see my brother. I am sure I can convince him of the error of his ways." The bishop's independence was gone; his fighting spirit broken.

"No, I won't wait a minute."

"But my church, my family—this is awful!"

"You should have thought of all this during the past summer when you were lambasting me on the franchise fight, Bishop Anderson. You have had your hour of triumph, now I'll have mine. 'People who live in glass houses'—you know the rest."

"Just a day, Mr. Dudley," pleaded the bishop.

"Not a second—to-morrow morning the story will be printed."

There was a silence broken by the reappearance of the girl. Advancing quickly toward the editor's desk she laid a bunch of keys in front of him and said:

"I forgot to give you these, Mr. Dudley. I would advise you to keep your desk securely locked. There are other papers in it which might incriminate you."

As she turned to go, Dudley said "Wait," and, taking his pen, wrote—and, handing her the paper, said:

"Here's an order on the cashier for one month's extra salary. You may need it."

Without looking at the order, Mary Sherman tore it in bits and threw the pieces on his desk. "I do not need your charity, Mr. Dudley," she scornfully replied, and, without another word, turned toward the door—*and there stood Captain Jack Anderson, smiling happily upon those present.*

CHAPTER XXX

CAPTAIN ANDERSON TO THE RESCUE

WHEN the brothers parted immediately after luncheon, Captain Anderson had gone to the Hotel Ashland and sent his card to a certain room. Then he went to the hotel parlor where he held an interview, which, to judge from his face, was satisfactory. This done, he hastened to *The Banner* Building, there expecting to meet the bishop and go home.

"Perhaps the old Doc might need me," said he thoughtfully unto himself. "He's a pretty hot-headed chap, and Dudley might hand him something he couldn't stand."

Entering the building, the captain inquired the way to Dudley's office, and, going up, found no one in the ante-room. The outer door was open and he heard the voice of Mary Sherman, or, rather, that of Phyllis Carew, as she scorned Dudley's check. Quietly entering the door, he

waited until she saw him and then advanced slowly into the room. A glad light came into the girl's eyes at the sight of the stalwart figure coming toward her. At once she knew that she had a friend in court. She almost sobbed as she murmured: "Oh, Jack!"

Taking one of her hands in his he inquired: "Where are you going?" Then, looking at the two men, he added, "why, what is the matter?"

Neither the editor nor bishop spoke. Both were busy with their thoughts. The projection of Captain Anderson into the "jury room" at this time bode no good for either of them.

Then to Phyllis he continued: "When I saw you a short while ago you were bright and cheerful—now you look worried."

Phyllis started to go out of the room, but the captain took her hand and held her back. Then he spoke to his brother, "Come, Doc—what is it? What's the trouble?"

No answer came from the bishop. His mind was befuddled over the dramatic events which had just taken place, and he wished his brother was in Labrador, or some other equally distant place. His coming, especially at this time, was most unfortunate.

It occurred to Captain Anderson he had never

met the editor personally, so he bowed and said:

"Mr. Dudley, I presume you know who I am?"

This gave the chief an opening. He had one brother completely at his mercy; why not finish the job?

"Certainly I do, Captain Anderson, and you come at a most opportune moment."

"Why, may I ask?"

Dudley sneered, "Ask the bishop."

A feeling was creeping in the ex-army man's mind that something was coming off and quickly, too. He would parley no longer, and, turning to the bishop:

"Well, Hank, what is it?" The use of "Hank" meant formalities were over, and the bishop realized it. He might as well get through with the matter as soon as possible, and be done with it.

"Jack, I know the story you—you wanted to tell me." The bishop's voice was husky and uncertain.

"And now that you do know it, Hank, what do you make of it?"

The bishop couldn't understand his brother's attitude. By rights the captain should have recoiled at the information, but, instead of that, he stood there calm and quiet as if he were on parade.

"Well, Jack, Mr. Dudley is going to publish it in to-morrow morning's *Banner. Give her up and stop it.*"

Phyllis Carew's heart almost ceased to beat, as she watched Captain Anderson turn and advance to the desk, behind which sat Dudley. There was a hard, metallic ring in his voice, as he said:

"Mr. Dudley, if you publish that story in to-morrow's or any other morning's paper, *I will kill you!* You understand—kill you as I would a mad dog!"

The editor found himself gazing into eyes, which, ordinarily, were blue, but now looked like bullets. Dudley knew this man meant every word he said, but he was not a physical coward; he had often been threatened before.

"You can't bluff me, Captain Anderson. I am running a newspaper, and neither you nor any other man can dictate my policy. Your brother tried that."

"I am not trying to bluff you, Mr. Dudley. I am simply stating what will happen."

The bishop interrupted: "But, Jack, the story is true," and Dudley, thinking to convince the army man once and for all, added: "And I have the court records of her divorce."

The bishop picked up the record and held it out to his brother, who did not deign to even look at it. He knocked it out of his brother's hand, and said:

"Court records be hanged! If I had a dollar for every court record that was not fair or just under our rotten judicial system I could buy Dudley's paper and the American Gas Light Company to boot."

Phyllis' heart sang with praises at these words. The bishop's heart sank within him. He knew his brother would keep his word and kill the editor if the story was published. Dudley's heart didn't sing at all. It just beat.

"Miss—Miss——" faltered the editor.

"Carew," said the captain—"don't forget the name, Mr. Dudley."

"Well, Miss Carew, then, has stated that she was trapped."

"And so she was, Mr. Dudley."

"How do you know this, Jack?" cried the bishop.

"How do I know? Why, I was in the Hotel Gilmore in New York the night it happened. So was mother."

"You and mother!" exclaimed the bishop, his

voice ringing with disgust. "*Mother* in a hotel like that! What will you do next?"

The army man looked at the churchman with a pitying glance.

"For a man of your years and learning, Doc, you know less than any man I've ever met. Such a scene could be staged in any respectable hotel in Presidio, New York, or any other city."

Dudley, naturally, put the wrong interpretation on Captain Anderson's statement.

"Oh," he sneered, "so you were in the Hotel Gilmore that night. Well, maybe——"

Captain Anderson knew of what the editor was thinking, and once more gazing at him with unflinching eyes, interrupted and said:

"Stop right there, Mr. Dudley, or I may not wait for the publication of to-morrow's paper to carry out my threat. *I can prove my statements.*"

"Huh, what can you prove?"

The bishop leaned forward to catch his brother's answer.

"That this girl was trapped by a gang and that she is as innocent as—as—well, *my mother.*"

"Leave mother out of this, I beg of you," testily cried the bishop.

"I will not—I mean what I say." The cap-

tain's dander was rising to the danger point.

"How can you prove this?" doubtingly asked the editor.

"By producing the leader of the gang."

Something within the bishop told him the captain was not firing wildly. His manner, his actions, his words.

"Where is this leader, Jack?"

"Over at the Hotel Ashland. May I use your 'phone, Mr. Dudley?"

"Yes, go ahead," replied the chief. He would give the captain a chance to make his bluff good.

Jack called the Ashland and paused a moment. Presently the answer came.

"Hello . . . Room 1018 . . . Are you able to come out now? . . . Thank you. Come to *The Banner* Building, please. . . . It's very important. . . . Yes, I know, but circumstances have changed and I want you now. Just a few blocks down the street. Take a taxi. Thank you. Come right up to Mr. Dudley's private office on the second floor."

While he was talking both men were wondering just what he was up to. Who was this person at the other end of the wire? Phyllis, too, was in a wondering mood—but she trusted the captain implicitly.

Turning away from the telephone, Jack Anderson scornfully looked into the eyes of each man alternately.

"Now I am going to make you two—pulpit and press—thoroughly ashamed of yourselves."

"Well, it's up to you to show me," said Dudley.

"Men of your stripe generally have to be shown with a club," retorted the captain.

The editor writhed uneasily, but waited. If this confident man could, as he said, prove Miss Carew's story, Dudley felt that he would be in a very unpleasant position. There was nothing to do but wait.

"Jack, if this divorce record is false, how long have you known it?"

"From the minute Miss Carew told her horrible experiences to mother and me."

"Mother!" ejaculated the astonished bishop.

"Yes, to mother and me—the day after it happened. Mother and I found her in that room in a dead faint after the conspirators had succeeded in compromising her name."

The bishop couldn't realize all this. It was getting mighty close to home.

"You found her there?" he stammered.

"I just said so. Mother cared for her that night."

Phyllis couldn't resist the temptation to interject. "And Mrs. Anderson has been a mother to me ever since."

Shaking his head, the bishop heard his brother say, "and mother gave Phyllis the money for her business education—every cent of which has been paid back."

Then a pleasant thought seemed to strike the army man; he smiled and continued:

"Doc, *you* furnished that money."

"I did? How?" gasped the astonished bishop.

"You had just published that book wherein your hero and heroine, *two unmarried people,* were shipwrecked on a lonely, uninhabited island in the South Pacific, and had to live there twenty years. Their clothing wasn't saved with them. That fact made the book a great seller, and from your royalties you sent mother a check for five hundred dollars. That's the money she used."

Even Dudley was amused at this incident and grimly smiled at the bishop's discomfiture.

"And after that, what did you do?" asked the bishop. He wanted the whole story.

"I started to find the proof. Of course, Pel-

ham and his gang left their accustomed haunts and I only had a slender clew.

"This," continued the captain, producing a piece of paper, "is a charge slip from Smith's department store, dated June 16th, 1908, and made out to Miss Rose Melton—one suit of silk pajamas, five dollars."

"What in the world has that to do with it?"

"They constitute a part of the properties and exhibits in Miss Carew's tragedy."

"Well, go on."

"I am glad, in a way, Doc, you would not hear this story the night mother and I came here, because then I did not have any proof save Phyllis' unsupported word, and my unbounded faith in her innocence. But now it's different, and I have the proof."

Dudley broke in, "Where is it?"

"You want me to come in, Captain Anderson?" asked a husky voice at the door.

CHAPTER XXXI

A COMPLETE EXHONERATION

THE four occupants turned and looked, and there stood what had once been a beautiful woman, but now weak, emaciated and pale, with great rings under her eyes. Her cheeks were hollow and her breathing difficult. One hand was held to her breast, and it was plain to be seen she was consumptive. Instinctively the bishop and editor arose, while Phyllis Carew looked on in wonderment.

Captain Anderson crossed the office, and, with that innate breeding of a gentleman, quietly said:

"Yes, thank you, come in," and, giving her his arm, assisted her slowly across the room.

"Sit down, won't you?"

"Thank you," came the gasping reply, "I am a little winded."

Slowly sinking in the proffered chair, the woman waited.

"Is this the proof?" thought Dudley, but he said:

"Miss Sherman—I beg your pardon—Miss Carew—do you know this woman?"

Phyllis shook her head and slowly answered:

"No, I do not. I never saw her before in my life."

A wan smile overspread the sick woman's face. She coughed and looked at Phyllis and said:

"Sure you don't know me. But, in a way, we are related."

Phyllis Carew wonderingly asked:

"How?"

"We have both been married to the same skate."

For a minute Phyllis did not realize what the woman meant; then, with a sudden rush, came the knowledge that this was *the other woman.* Advancing toward her, Phyllis gasped:

"Then you are——?"

"Yes," interrupted the poor creature, "yes, I am the woman who took your husband away from you, and I wish to God I never had!" There was a world of bitterness in her husky voice, and she clenched her hands as she spoke.

For a second all the scorn of Phyllis' nature came to the surface as she cried, "Oh—you—

you!" Then, recovering herself, her gentle soul and sweet nature arose to the occasion, and she continued:

"Oh, I pity you! I pity you!"

Bishop Anderson and Dudley heard the woman with mingled feelings of doubt. Captain Anderson merely bided his time. He knew, but the facts were not yet forthcoming.

"You say," questioned the bishop, "you took her husband? How?"

"You want all the facts? Well, I'll give them, only please don't interrupt me. I want to get this over as soon as possible. I took this woman's husband through a job that was put up on her by a lawyer named Snodgrass, whereby we got her to come to room 618 of the Hotel Gilmore, New York, with a man named Cullen. We did this by having her 'phoned that her husband was ill and wanted her. She came and I reckon you know the rest."

Dudley said: "We have the divorce record here telling of a disordered room."

"Sure you have that. We arranged all that."

"We?" cried the bishop.

"Sure, we. Ain't I telling you, Snodgrass, the lawyer; Pelham, the man; Cullen, the co-respondent, and little me. But if you want to

know, I paid for the whole thing . . . and how I did pay!"

The memory of her payment was bitter, indeed. Phyllis Carew could scarcely believe her ears.

The woman continued:

"Snodgrass, the lawyer, set the stage. The 'phone brought the woman, the two witnesses planted by Snodgrass came and saw; the presumption of guilt was established. The rest was easy. It cost me about fifteen hundred dollars, and my reward was the man—and this girlie's penalty—disgrace."

Both Dudley and the bishop were astounded; they could hardly believe their ears. A moment ago Phyllis Carew stood before them, as she had before the bar of justice, convicted, stripped of the last shred of character. Here was indisputable evidence that they were wrong.

"How could you!" cried the bishop. "How could you wreck an innocent woman's life?"

"Bishop," replied the woman slowly, "women of my class don't stop to consider these things. I used to be a member of the "Sunshine Chorus." I had face and figure. A rich old gink fell in love with me; he had coin—I wanted it, so I married him and went to 'Frisco to live. A year

afterwards he died, leaving me a bunch of money and the call of Broadway was too strong. I am a product of the bright lights—I have many sisters. Well, I went back and I met Pelham. He's a Forty-second and Broadway chap. He was a good-looking pup. Gave me a song and dance about his unhappy married life—I fell for it. He fitted into my scheme of life and I bought him—like I would a horse. Women of my class don't count the cost in such things. We just pay! pay! pay!"

A blaze of wrath swept over Dudley. He cried: "And you call yourself a woman?"

Imperturbably, the woman replied:

"Sure. There are two classes of women in the world. This girlie is in one class and I'm in the other. She was too good for Pelham. I did her a favor—only the method *was* rather raw."

Jack Anderson's spirits were high when he realized "Mary Sherman" was winning. Standing beside Phyllis, holding her hand in his, he said to the woman:

"Tell them, please, what became of Cullen and Pelham."

"They won't bother any one any more. When I got Pelham, he and Cullen had a high old time while my money lasted. Oh, yes, I let them have

it all right. Then they went crooked. I had some looks left at that time and they persuaded me to join them in a badger game against a rich old guy. But we got caught with the goods."

"That," said Captain Anderson, "is how I finally got hold of this woman, from an article in the paper, which said her name was formerly Melton. That charge slip I just showed you gave me the clue."

The woman continued:

"Well, in the Tombs the medico said I had a punctured lung and couldn't live long in that joint."

Impulsively, Phyllis put out her hand in sympathy. All rancor had faded from her heart. A sister was in distress.

"You poor thing!" she cried.

"Thank you, child. So I sent for the district attorney and came through—made a deal."

"You mean you turned state's evidence?" asked the captain.

"Something like that. I got out of jail. Pelham and Cullen got fifteen years up the river, and I hope they serve every day of it!"

"So do I," said Dudley.

"Fifteen years, *horrible!*" exclaimed Phyllis.

"Yes," continued the woman, with an attempt

at humor in her voice, "their previous good characters prevented their getting thirty."

"And you?" softly inquired the bishop.

"I, oh, I hocked the few remaining jewels I had and beat it out to Denver, the Mecca of rich tourists and busted lungers. You can see I am not a tourist, and I won't be there long. Captain Anderson found me and asked me to come here. It wasn't hard, because I wanted to right the wrong I had done before—I—went—away—for—good." A violent spell of coughing prevented further utterance for the moment.

When she had recovered herself Jack Anderson asked:

"You will swear to all this?"

"On a stack of bibles ten feet high."

But Dudley was satisfied. In his heart came a feeling to which he had been a stranger for many years—one of softness. Mayhap it was the spirit of his own lost Mary moving him. Be that as it may, he turned to the army man and said:

"That will not be necessary, not for me. Will it for you, Bishop?"

"No—the truth is before us—I'm satisfied. I only wonder such things can be. Is it possible, Madam, that such things are done?"

"Done! Huh, Bishop, that's not a circum-

stance to some stunts pulled off in the name of the law. I guess the editor knows."

Uneasily, Dudley shifted in his seat, because he remembered only too well the "ill-legal" trick he had been trying to put over all summer in his franchise fight.

"Where is this Snodgrass?" he asked.

"Snodgrass? Oh, he's prosperous. Opened a branch office in Chicago, and some day you may see his shingle hanging out here in Presidio. He has a few relatives in every large city."

"I hope he does come here," gritted Dudley, "I'd like to get at him."

The woman smiled sadly and looked at her auditors. Her work was done. She had made all the amends possible—now it was over. Her spirit was lighter.

"Well," she said, "I guess I'll go back to the hotel and lie down, and to-night—I'll beat it back to Denver. I am glad I have made this statement."

She started to rise, and Captain Anderson immediately went to her assistance. Pausing a moment in front of Phyllis, she said:

"Something tells me, girlie, you are going to be very happy. You deserve it and I am glad. Good-bye."

Phyllis bowed her head in sympathy and tears filled her eyes. "Oh, I wish I could do something for you," she whispered.

"You can, girlie—give me a kind thought once in a while—and—forgive me for the wrong I did you. Good-bye." Turning to Captain Anderson, she said:

"You needn't come with me. My taxi is outside."

Then came the remnants of the old chorus girl spirit of raillery, and, as she slowly went out, she slammed back at the army man:

"If you ever get tired of your present job, Captain Anderson, write the Police Commissioner of New York; he needs you on the force. Good-bye."

The woman was gone.

Turning to the editor and his brother, the captain put the questions fair and square:

"Now are you gentlemen satisfied?"

Both men were beaten, and they knew it. For an answer Dudley took up the telephone and said:

"Give me the city room." After a short wait, he continued: "That you, Bradford? Kill that Carew-Anderson story and return all copy and proofs to me at once." Slowly he hung up the

receiver, and, looking at his guests—for such they now were, he said:

"I am beaten—beaten two ways. It is galling to be beaten by a man, but to be beaten by this slip of a girl, fighting alone in the dark, for her honor—that is sublime, and I bow my head. Bishop Anderson, you've won; Miss Carew, you've won, and, Captain Anderson, permit me to say, yours is the greatest victory, because you have won a prize beyond price—*a good woman.*"

The whole world brightened for Jack and Phyllis. This great, strong man, this indomitable fighter, this representative of mighty power admitted his error, and, admitting it, James Burchard Dudley, for the first time in his life, became a real man. He had regained his self-respect and he would keep it.

Bradford brought in the proofs and copy, and, laying them before the editor, said:

"Here's that stuff, Mr. Dudley. What shall I run in its place?"

Smilingly the editor replied:

"Run a biographical sketch of Captain Anderson. Get your information from the army register, and I'll write a personal note. Use the halftone you had for the other article."

"Yes, sir," and Bradford bowed his way out.

Impulsively Captain Anderson came forward, and grasped the editor's hand.

"Mr. Dudley, you're a brick!"

"Thank you," replied the editor, biting off the end of a big black cigar.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE HATCHET BURIED

INTO the bishop's mind there came a maze of conjecture. He was proud of his brother; he admired the girl for the spirited defense she had made—he felt that he was under many obligations to her for the part she had played in the franchise matter. All the ammunition he had used in his broadsides at Dudley had been furnished by Phyllis Carew—erstwhile Mary Sherman. Without her assistance the fight would surely have been lost, and to-day there would have been in the making, many counterparts of the man Alberts in Presidio. What if the stockholders, whose very existence had been saved by this girl, should find out how very, very much they were in her debt? What would they do? But the truth would never be known. It would be better so. Otherwise, her story might become public property and not perfectly understood.

This would result greatly to her injury. On the other hand, the public might make a tremendous heroine of her—and that would never do.

Dudley, the domineering editor, the Big Chief, the man, who, in days gone by, would stop at nothing, now seemed literally born again out of the happiness that had come to him by reason of his having done the right thing at last. With a feeling of grim satisfaction in his mind, he jokingly observed:

"Bishop Anderson, I fancy that even in your victory you have been defeated. You'll be having a ceremony on your hands that you had made up your mind not to perform."

"Yes, I have been defeated," slowly replied the bishop. "But——" here the bishop buried his face in his hands and became lost in thought. "The church, the church," thought he. "What of my church? What will become of me if I go beyond its rules in such matters? My church sayeth: 'Thou shalt not,' therefore, how can I disobey her commands? Here am I, faced with the problem of uniting this divorced woman to my brother, and, as yet, the records of the courts are against her. What am I to do?—*I know not what to do!*" The bishop was at the point of despair. Then, suddenly, the still, small voice of

reason whispered within him. It seemed to ask the vital question: *"Is the church always right?"*

As if to answer its own question the voice from within went on to say: "The foundation of the Christian church—no matter what the denomination—is *God.* None but the atheist denies that. But upon that foundation, man—mere, mortal, erring man—has builded numerous superstructures, and the result has been that many different denominations have sprung into being. And in these man-made edifices, could not mistakes have been made? Were not certain laws made to fit conditions of other days than these? Had not he—the bishop—said to Dudley, *the only Man who never made a mistake was crucified?* What would that *Man* have done had *He* been on earth to hear this woman's story? Would *He* have condemned her? Would *He* have turned *His* back upon her and said: "You are unclean!—*the law makes you so?"* Would the *Man* whom the bishop had quoted as saying: *"Let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone,"* further torture this woman's soul by reason of a *man-made* law? The answer came—it came *straight from Calvary's Cross.* He would not. The bishop again viewed the scene he had so beautifully described in his sermons many, many

times. He could see the three figures impaled, crucified on the three rude crosses. He could see the lowering clouds, the hostile legions; he could see the Roman soldiers stab the central figure, from whose riven side gushed forth the life blood of the world. Also he saw the *crown of thorns,* and just as the mortality of *Him—the carpenter of Nazareth*—took on immortality, he could hear the gentle, quivering voice from a parched throat murmur: *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."*

There was a tremendous question for this *Godly worldly* bishop to answer, but it came at last, and in no uncertain terms. It came like a ray of sunshine breaking through the clouds after a rain; when every iridescent drop becomes a scintillating gem of purest ray serene. It illumined his soul; it warmed his heart as he saw the light. *The man-made laws of the church might be wrong.* In this case the benefit of the doubt must be given to the woman.

But the bishop was a fighting Anderson—of the same species as his brother. One thing would yet would save his face. His church regarded this woman as outside of the pale, so far as marriage or communion were concerned. One more

little effort he would make to save the tenets of the church.

"Miss Carew," queried the bishop. "Would it not be possible for you to return to New York, reopen this case, and get another trial?"

Jack Anderson answered this question for Phyllis Carew—and he wasn't slow in doing it.

"Great Cæsar's ghost, Doc! Are you utterly mad? Go back there? Kick up all this fuss again? Spread the news broadcast again in order that she shall ask for freedom from a crook? Come—where's that sense of fair play you preach about? No, sir, not in a thousand years. Phyllis is free and she stays so until the time *you—or some other preacher make her mine.*"

Phyllis stood by the captain's side waiting for the bishop's reply. She did want to be married in her own church, but if the bishop remained obdurate she would not hold out any longer against the captain. He had fought hard, proved her innocence—she would go with him hereafter.

"But the church!" faltered the bishop.

"Any church that refuses to sanction *this* marriage, Bishop Anderson, is no church at all. Left to your members they would vote for it *en masse.*" This from the domineering editor.

Then came the thought to the bishop, "What

right have I to judge? There has been no sin on the woman's part, and the church would be wrong *not* to consummate this union."

The sudden appearance of Pat Kearney saved the bishop from an immediate reply. Kearney stopped on the threshold.

"I beg your pardon, Chief—I thought you were alone." He turned to go.

"Come here, my boy," commanded Dudley, and the tone of the editor's voice made Kearney pause. Slowly he advanced, and, placing a sealed letter on the desk, said:

"I came to quit. I am sick of the whole job."

"What is this?" asked Dudley, picking up the letter.

"My resignation."

Without breaking its seal, Big Chief Dudley tore the letter into bits.

"Your resignation is not accepted, Pat," said he calmly, "I need you more than ever. *Bishop Anderson and I both need you.*"

"Both need me! You mean to say that you have quit fighting the church?" Kearney could not comprehend such a flop in so short a time.

"I have!" Editor and cleric were now smiling into his surprised face.

"The *millenium* has arrived!" snorted Kear-

ney. "Roaring lions all summer, and now *meek lambs*. What next, I wonder?"

"This," continued Dudley, "I want you to find Mr. Alberts."

"I've got him already, Jim."

"Good! I don't suppose he will want to see me, and I don't blame him. You care for him while he's here, and when he is rested up, go with him to his old home. Buy back his farm and hire a good man to run it. Put him in a sanitorium for a while; you may draw on me for any amount. Whatever it requires will not repay him for his years of misery—but it's all I can do. I made a mistake. I've been a hard man in my time—*but I'm through!*" A gorgeous smile spread over Kearney's face.

"Jim, when it comes down to brass tacks you are white through and through. I am going out in the plant"—and, shaking hands with everybody he left the room—too near unto tears of joy to say more.

Jack and Phyllis stood before the bishop.

"Now, Doc," asked the brother, "what is the ecclesiastical verdict? Will you assist Phyllis in joining the Anderson family? Now's the time to say!"

The bishop arose to his feet, and, bowing low before Phyllis, replied:

"Miss Carew, will you *allow me the honor* of performing the marriage ceremony between you and my *fighting* brother?"

Jack Anderson's hand came down with a resounding whack on the bishop's shoulder.

"Good boy, Doc!" he cried, "I knew you would do it." Phyllis answered by throwing her arms about the bishop's neck.

"Wait a moment," broke in Dudley, "I want to be in on this. Miss Sherman—I beg your pardon—Miss—er—Miss Carew is my secretary. I claim the privilege of giving the bride away."

"And you shall have it, Mr. Dudley," replied the now happy girl, planting a kiss upon the broad, upturned forehead of the editor, who blushed red to the roots of his scanty hair. But he was mightily pleased even though abashed to the point of wanting to run away. Jumping to his feet he looked at his watch hurriedly.

"Why, bless my soul, it's nearly three o'clock," said he, and grabbing his hat, shouted, "come on, Bishop, let's go to the ball game."

"I'll just go you for luck, Dudley," replied the bishop, and, arm in arm, they left the office—wise old boys, they!

Left alone, two lovers looked into each other's eyes. Two soft arms stole around the army man's neck, two lips were raised to his.

"I love you, Jack."

"And I love you, Phyllis." Jack Anderson did not wait a second with his reply. A new day had dawned in his life and that of the charming girl before him.

Two days later Phyllis Carew became Mrs. John Edmond Anderson, and when Bishop Anderson said: "Whom God hath joined, let not man put asunder," he knew that here was *one* marriage which God *had* joined—after many, many trials and tribulations.

Mother Anderson, through her tears, exclaimed: "Just think, I am seventy-six and once again a mother!"

THE END





